LEARNING FROM CAIRO

Global Perspectives and Future Visions

Edited by:
Beth Stryker
Omar Nagati
Magda Mostafa



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CLUSTER

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO
الجامعة الأمريكية بالقاهرة

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Editors' note:

Some of the transcribed conference dialogues excerpted in this publication have been translated from the Arabic, edited, or condensed.

Transliteration of Arabic words and names in the text (except for names already established in historic records, such as Zamalek and Maspero, or artwork titles) are based on a simplified version of the system of International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies. Diacritical marks are limited to the letters ʿayn (ʿ) and hamza (ʾ).

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1/ INTRODUCTION

Introduction

The idea of the *Learning from Cairo* conference developed during the months following the January 2011 Revolution, in the context of a rapidly shifting political and urban landscape, accompanied by an increasing societal awareness of urban issues and public space. One of the main premises of this conference hinges upon the hypothesis that this Revolution is an urban revolution *par excellence* in its roots, manifestations and ramifications. It would be impossible to separate decades of political repression from the conditions of social marginalization and the geography of exclusion that eventually led to such a moment of implosion. This moment took on an urban turn, manifesting itself in the streets and public spaces of Cairo and other cities in Egypt. Further, this urban expression is not limited to public space as a container for the revolution, but also the fact that the dialectic relationship between a repressive political regime and an urbanization of injustice are being repeatedly reconstituted through public space as a social structure and cultural signifier. Today, as we continue to experience a fluid political and urban landscape, such a condition of flux poses both a challenge to account for meaningful urban practice within changing and sometimes conflicting frames of reference, as well as an opportunity to open up new intellectual and political horizons.

Within this context, we can identify two major urban transformations since the eruption of the Revolution. The first could be measured by changes in the face of the city itself; both in its urban landscape, and in terms of practices in public space; such as newly erected walls and barricades, public art and graffiti, street vendors and unruly traffic. The other, intangible, urban consequence may be summed up in changes in the collective psyche towards authorities in general, and towards the city and public space, in particular. We have referred to this condition as a "new urban citizenship" defining the power relation between individuals and communities, on the one hand, and their streets and neighborhoods, on the other.[1] This shifting balance of power is playing out within the framework of an increasingly vulnerable state, as it relates to an empowered citizenship that is making claims to public space and the right to the city in general.

With consideration for such conditions, the concept underlying this conference has been proposed along two main intellectual trajectories. The first situates Cairo within a comparative international context, to foster a critical dialogue between lessons from other cities' urban development and policies, and Cairo's own experience: its urban revolution, and parallel political and social transformations. It is hoped that this dialogue will broaden the exchange between experts and policymakers, on the one hand, and local communities and civil society organizations, on the other, in an attempt to transcend local boundaries and specific moments of political transformation. The other trajectory is summed up in the title of this conference, *Learning from Cairo*, by invoking revisionist literature of modern planning from the 1960s and 1970s. Early postmodern architecture literature was based on waging a systematic critique against hegemonic modernist meta-narrative, attempting to extract alternative languages and structures from what was then deemed to be a commercially built environment unworthy of academic attention. We refer here to Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown's *Learning from Las Vegas* (1972).[2] By the 1980s and 1990s, the rise of postcolonial and subaltern schools expressed themselves in urban literature through a systematic deconstruction of the centrality of the "North" (Europe and North America) in both architecture and urban history and theory. At the same time, they reintroduced the urban experience as well as the marginalized communities of the developing world to mainstream urban discourse, in works such as *Favelas, Learning from* (2010).[3]

The current moment and urban condition in Cairo thus calls for reshaping urban discourse, and restructuring its urban policies: taking into account the

hitherto excluded voices, unraveling lessons from the geographical and social margins, and distilling alternative patterns and urban experiences from the peripheries. Examples may range from informal housing and street vendors, on the local level, to cities and urbanization processes in the global South on a regional and international level. This conference, therefore, aimed at challenging the current hegemonic urban structure. It hoped to contribute to restructuring the power relations between the North and South; in academic discourse, professional practice and urban policies, and within the broader context of revolutionary process and social movements, as expressed in citizens' claim to the city and public space.

This vision was translated into a tripartite organizational structure for the conference, within a conscious comparative framework. It invited contributions from Africa, Asia and Latin America, as well as some examples from Europe and North America, with an emphasis on lessons learned from the global South. The event was organized into three days, each providing a different format for dialogue and exchange. Day one included three public plenary sessions to present examples from international urban experience, each session framed within a discipline outside urban planning. The first panel offered a historical perspective, with an emphasis on the global South undergoing political and/or structural transformations. The second presented a political context of the urban revolution and right to the city, bringing examples from Latin America. The third session provided an economic framework for informal urbanism, including both research and design perspectives, as well as those pertaining to public and urban policies. Following this, the second and third days aimed at providing a forum for more specialized discussions along geographical and thematic topics, and concluded with directions, visions and speculations shared with a public audience in the final session at the end of the conference. To guarantee a diverse audience, maintain a balanced representation, and enrich public debate, invitations were extended to various organizations, institutions and individuals, including academics, researchers, practitioners, and students, in addition to representatives from governmental agencies and public institutions, civil society organizations, and local communities and NGOs.
Day two was organized into urban tours, offering participants a direct experience of the main urban conditions in Cairo, including its deteriorating urban core, its surrounding informal belt and the distant desert cities. These tours aimed at contextualizing the discussions and bringing their debates into close contact with the urban practices emerging on the ground since January 2011. While the second day was geographically organized, the third day was structured around closed, parallel working sessions that were conceived thematically, each focusing on specific topics (such as housing, public space, governance, and participation) and each framed as a dialogue between local experience and international examples. Day three ended with a closing panel discussion to present the main points and suggestions of these working sessions, as well as a space to critically debate potential future visions and urban trajectories.

We present here summaries and reflections generated from the *Learning from Cairo* conference, as part of what we hope will be a sustainable critical urban discourse, aimed at developing alternative visions and urban policies that may live up to the expectations and aspirations of the Revolution. This book has been conceived as a companion to the *Learning from Cairo* website, at www.learningfromcairo.org, where full video documentation of the conference is available.

1: Nagati, O., & Stryker, B. 2013. *Archiving the City in Flux: Cairo's Shifting Landscape Since the January 25th Revolution*. Cairo: CLUSTER
2: Scott Brown, D., & Venturi, R., 1972. *Learning from Las Vegas*. USA: MIT Press
3: Lotus, 2010. *Favelas, Learning from*. [journal] issue 143. Lotus: Italy

2/ PROCEEDINGS

A-Plenary Sessions

A-1 Urban Political Change: Southern Perspectives
A-2 Right to the City: Emergent Practices in Latin America
A-3 Cities in Transition: Public Engagement and Civic Design

A-Plenary Sessions

A-1 Urban Political Change: Southern Perspectives
A-2 Right to the City: Emergent Practices in Latin America
A-3 Cities in Transition: Public Engagement and Civic Design

Day One
Panel 1

A-1
Urban Political Change: Southern Perspectives

Khaled Fahmy
Department of History, AUC

Gautam Bhan
Indian Institute for Human Settlements, Delhi

Mokena Makeka
Makeka Design Lab

Discussant:
Mohamed Elshahed
Cairobserver

Urban Political Change: Southern Perspectives

This inaugural panel was moderated by Cairobserver's Mohamed Elshahed, who opened by noting the powerful timing and thematics of the *Learning from Cairo* conference, addressing recent shifts in Egypt's architectural and urban practices. These shifts have been spearheaded by those Elshahed refers to as "the revolutionary generation and the future of our cities," including conference contributors Ahmed Zaazaa of Madd Platform and Yahia Shawkat of the Shadow Ministry of Housing. Indeed Egypt's was an urban Revolution, born from and achieved on the streets.

The session proceeded to discuss urban political change, with historian Khaled Fahmy emphasizing the critical role of urban control in society. Fahmy's presentation centered around an alternative, historically documented view of the origins of Khedive Ismail's Cairo.

Fahmy referred back to 2002, when inadequate dialogue between the Egyptian people and their governing institutions precluded citizens' agency, and compelling change. In a sort of "he who controls the streets controls the people" mantra, urban control became a means to prevent civic dialogue. The January 25th Revolution revealed the power of allowing civic dialogue, which is necessary for effective change.

Fahmy outlined, through documents archived in *Dar al-Watha'iq al-Misriya* (Egypt's Book and Documentation Authority), how the betterment of Cairo's citizens underscored earlier designs of Khedivean Cairo. These documents challenge the popular view of the heralded urban designs as eurocentric, the aesthetic copy known as "Paris on the Nile." Fahmy's research indicates that the primary drive of that vast urban project was the wellbeing of its citizens and the desire to create a healthy, safe environment for its occupants. By contrast, today's top-down planning approaches, such as *Cairo 2050*, have veered away from this bottom-up approach, to the detriment of citizens. These historical lessons suggest that the way forward for architects and urbanists is to remain citizen-centric rather than form-centric, and to work with the rights and general betterment of Cairo's dwellers in mind.

The second presentation, by Gautam Bhan of the Indian Institute for Human Settlements, focused on the role of public space as a platform for processes of political change. Bhan presented the post-colonial Indian experience, which began with national urban citizenship. He critiqued the urban lexicon inherited from this period in India's history, with its overarching master planning and contemporary irrelevance to urban citizens. Through various examples of Indian street movements, he raised the idea of the "impoverishment of poverty." This involves: exclusion from the imagined economy; the rise of a new elite urban citizenship; and an altered representation of the poor. He proposed that it is such discord that sometimes drives revolution.

The final presentation was by Mokena Makeka of South Africa's Makeka Design Lab. Makeka, speaking as a practitioner, explored the right to the city and the emerging role of the designer as facilitator of this right. He examined this in light of the South African experience, which is compounded by issues of race, which are "geographized" – keeping the poorest and predominantly black communities farthest from resources and services. The irony of this dynamic is that the poor still vote for the very people who keep them in poverty. In his work Makeka tries to regain ownership of such spaces for the people, particularly those spaces that previously were icons of oppression. In his practice he cultivates cultural references, including inspiration from local mythology, to create an aesthetic vocabulary of reclamation.



Urban Political Mobilization

Gautam Bhan

In the recent past, to think of Cairo was to think of crowds: of gatherings, slogans, chants; of *tahrir*, in both its literal and spatial senses. The graffiti and mural art of the revolution remain on the streets leading to Tahrir Square both as testimony and premonition – it is clear that the square has not nearly seen the last of its gatherings. The act of "learning from Cairo" in this moment then must at least in part be to think about urban political mobilizations – the public gathering of citizens in mass actions seeking particular political ends. It must reflect on who is taking to the streets, with what claims and to what ends. It must ask a question that is both to and from Cairo: how does mass action in an emerging democratic framework differ from that in opposition to a unified, easily identifiable "enemy"?

Perhaps one way to think of this question is to ask it in a different location. In Delhi, the capital of the "world's largest democracy," mass actions have their own history and contemporary reality. The city's streets have seen multiple, diverse and complicated mass actions in recent times. Each has been unique in whom it has mobilized, to what ends and with what imaginations of rights, entitlements and belonging. Each has told us something different about mass actions within democratic frameworks and their relationship to a set of rights to the city, inequality and citizenship. Let me take four moments from these mass actions.

Moment One is a recognizable frame. The urban poor, forcefully evicted from their homes that they have self-built or "autoconstructed" (Caldeira and Holston, 2005) over years and decades, protest against their displacement.[1] They demand, as they have historically done, protection from the welfare state. Their claims are a familiar story of public action: workers and the poor gain power in numbers and direct their demands to the welfare state. The welfare state, in turn, recognizes the impoverished urban majority; its own role and failure in (re)producing their deprivations; and, of course, their democratic and demographic power.

Moment Two is a newer frame. It is another protest against eviction and displacement, but this time from middle-class and elite shop owners who have had their shops "sealed" by the government for illegally running commercial enterprises in residential areas against planning norms. This is not a constituency that usually takes to the streets – it is meant to function, to use Partha Chatterjee's frame, in civil society and use elite influence and bureaucratic channels to reach its aims (Chatterjee, 2004). Their slogans are telling. In the picture, the signboards – "How will we feed our children? How will we run our kitchen?" – make claims more familiar to the narratives of need-based rights used by the poor. The claim is another form; a vulnerability and rights-based claim directed at the state. The moments begin to spill into each other.

Moment Three is the mass awakening of the middle-class citizen as public actor. The famed anti-corruption movement led by Anna Hazare and Arvind Kejriwal brings tens of thousands of middle-class and elite Indians to the streets in long campaigns to end corruption. These protests seem eerily familiar, yet strange – the crowds, the energy and the passion remain but the claimants and their claims feel decidedly different. In their definitions of corruption, their tactics, their insistence upon legal change and the creation of an all-powerful new authority, as well as their narrative of what brings them to the streets; a new class of public actors emerges demonstrating not need and vulnerability, but power, entitlement and frustration. These actors – the self-described "middle class" of "ordinary men and women" – direct demands to the developmental state but challenge it and hold it accountable. Implicitly, they lay claim to being the urban majority, the public and the citizenry in whose interest and name democratic powers must rule.

Moment Four returns us to another originary form of mass action: the gathering in anger and outrage. The brutal gang-rape of a young girl on a bus in Delhi brings women and men to the streets day after day demanding new changes in law, procedures of criminal justice, and (that much harder, intangible ideal) new mindsets and value-frames within which to see gender equality and justice. Here all the moments begin to blur as unexpected coalitions form, novel forms of protest intersect and initiate action, legal reform becomes a focus of change; while the state responds, engages and co-opts, making strategy eternally insufficient yet always vitally necessary. In the end, diluted versions of tougher laws on sexual violence do emerge but everyone



The anti-corruption movement led by Anna Hazare and Arvind Kejriwal brings tens of thousands of middle-class and elite Indians to the streets in long campaigns to end corruption.

seems unsatisfied. It's hard to know how to understand the "success" of the action except to know that it transformed all those who participated in it.

These four moments represent only one part of a complex reality of contemporary mass action in Delhi. Yet some trends seem to emerge. First, the inevitability and repetitive nature of mass action that can never afford to stop. These protests cannot "succeed" or "fail" in simple, measurable ways; they can never have an end point. The protests that brought people to the streets in each of those moments will be triggered again, towards the next phase of resolution that will hold only until the next breach, the next eviction, the next scandal, or the next assault. What does it mean for mass action to try and stand in for everyday governance?

Second, each of these moments reminds us of of the potential for mass public actions to be spaces of inequality and exclusion themselves. I have argued elsewhere that the emergence of the elite urban citizen in Delhi is a marker of how democratic claims and strategies of public protest can come from a location of relative power and privilege, which can reclaim the street and its demographic and symbolic political power for a new urban majority. The "common man" and the "public" stand redefined, altered in identity and content. This is part of a larger phenomenon I have called the "impoverishment of poverty": the reducing of the efficacy of poverty and vulnerability as a claim to rights and entitlements from the state or empathy from fellow citizens. As the elite claim both the discourse of suffering ("how will we feed our children?") and the spaces in which the poor gather, competing claims to and interpretations of rights becomes a new political terrain itself. The right to work as a street vendor versus the right to a street to walk on. The right to squat on the riverbank versus the right to a healthy city with a riverside promenade.

Public actions are framed by their larger political and economic contexts. As the Egyptian Revolution's fervor has dimmed temporarily, the cleavages between the different reasons that brought Egyptians to Tahrir Square are becoming more and more evident. The economic regime that also partly drove people to the streets remains unchanged even as the political structure appears different. In Delhi, the moments described above tell us how democracy can accommodate public action within its reproduction of inequality. They show us that the street and mass action are not necessarily the voices of the marginalized but also the voices of the powerful, who no longer use only the corridors of power to wield their influence. What then do we make of the next round of public actions in Cairo? Who will take the streets? To what ends? With what imaginations of citizenship? To bring it all together and leave one question from Delhi to Cairo on the table: What are the ways in which Egypt's new and more democratic political order will negotiate, legitimize and reproduce the political-economic inequalities that birthed it?

1: Caldeira, T. & Holston, J., 2005. State and urban space in Brazil: from modernist planning to democratic interventions. In Collier, S.J. & Ong, A., eds. 2005. *Global Anthropology: Technology, Governmentality, Ethics*. London: Blackwell. pp 393-416.

Identity, Politics, Aesthetics:
Architecture in Praxis

Mokena Makeka

As a committed architect and urbanist, I believe that there is a reflexive relationship between patterns of human behavior, the built environment, and the body politic. The experience of a post-revolutionary society and how architects and designers operate in this triumvirate context, has been a provocation for civic action and design. South Africa as a state continues to grapple with the resilient residue of a colonial and apartheid ideology that has impacted access to services and resources, and has shaped the nature of its social institutions. Unfortunately this residue persists in the character of urban development, and poverty in the main retains its racialised character. The geography of the post-apartheid period continues to reproduce these patterns, with the rare deviation tracking a sluggishly growing and "previously disadvantaged" middle class.

Disruptions to these patterns are piecemeal and incremental in outlook at best, so the socio-transformation of the spatial economy of the city has been sporadic and anaemic in impact. This stuttering pace of tangible change has South Africa emerging with a highly contested public protest profile, as various unions and other organisations set the annual calendar to a predictable nationwide wave of strikes, many of which have turned violent and come to international attention. The irony is that South Africa has not translated the fury and momentum of these protests and strikes into recognisable shifts in political patronage or loyalty; this speaks to a larger question of accountability, and whether or not such strikes necessarily translate into political insecurity (a situation that I would argue is currently not the case). However, service delivery protests revolve around two key principles: first, the need for systemic and layered accountability; and second, the need for quality, efficiently delivered infrastructure.

The word "delivery" in and of itself captures the relationship between the state and its citizens in the current body politic paradigm: citizens expect services to be delivered and provided on demand, and the social compact between the citizen and state provides the citizen with an illusory access to power, when in fact, waiting for delivery is a disenabling state of being. I am of

Democracy is co-produced, and its attributes should not be delivered in toto *by outside forms of agency, but should be achieved through engagement.*



the opinion that active citizenship, with an attendant participation in delivery, would allow better custodianship of democratic and layered accountability in the medium to long term. Democracy is co-produced, and its attributes should not be delivered *in toto* by outside forms of agency, but should be achieved through engagement.

Social infrastructure plays a critical role in toggling the social imaginary of the city. With its assistance, the constrained state can begin to intervene in and erode patterns of disparity and their insidious residue. The work of my studio has sought to frame socio-cultural infrastructure as a key component that anticipates and enables a deeper democratic culture. This view considers the work of the architect as akin to that of a translator, enabling architecture and public space to express the ambitions and fears of a progressive society. My practice has applied this stratagem to all scales of projects, ranging from public art, to architecture, to city-based scenario planning for transport infrastructure. Several highlights over the early life of the practice include the architectural reimagining of railway police stations as a means to humanize a state institution damaged by its historic role as an enthusiastic facilitator in social oppression; the reimagining of the Cape Town Station into a generous civic amenity; a competition entry for the Cape Town World Cup Stadium that sought to reconcile the pressures of FIFA concerns with local economic development needs; and the reordering of an inner-city hub for Cape Town to deepen public transport for the vast majority of the city who are reliant on its services. These projects and others share an ideological foundation: that there need be an intimate relationship between aesthetics, function, social impact, and identity for institutions that manage the social infrastructure, the users who are subject to their design, and the general public who encounter such architecture in their environment. In this guise, aesthetics transcend the boundaries of taste and emotive subjectivity to become an emotional code through which the building can be interpreted in precise terms. So symbolism evolves a new lexicon of possibility in the social imaginary, regarding what we want the city to look like, and whom we envision it may serve. To conclude I therefore pose this question to Cairenes: What is the nature of the democracy towards which they seek to contribute? And I ask Cairenes to reflect on the role of design in the making of an identity that adds accountability as well as brings joy and delight to what should be the ordinary act of enjoying the rights to the city.

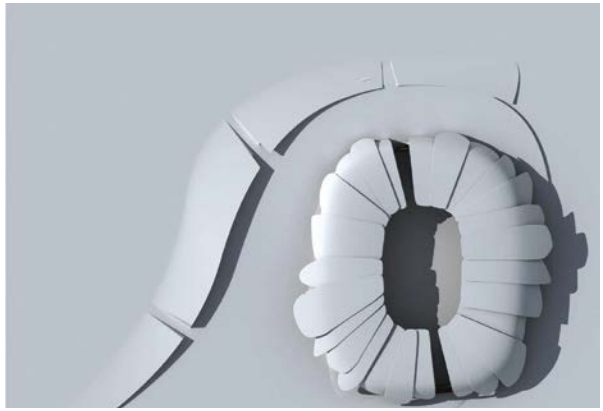


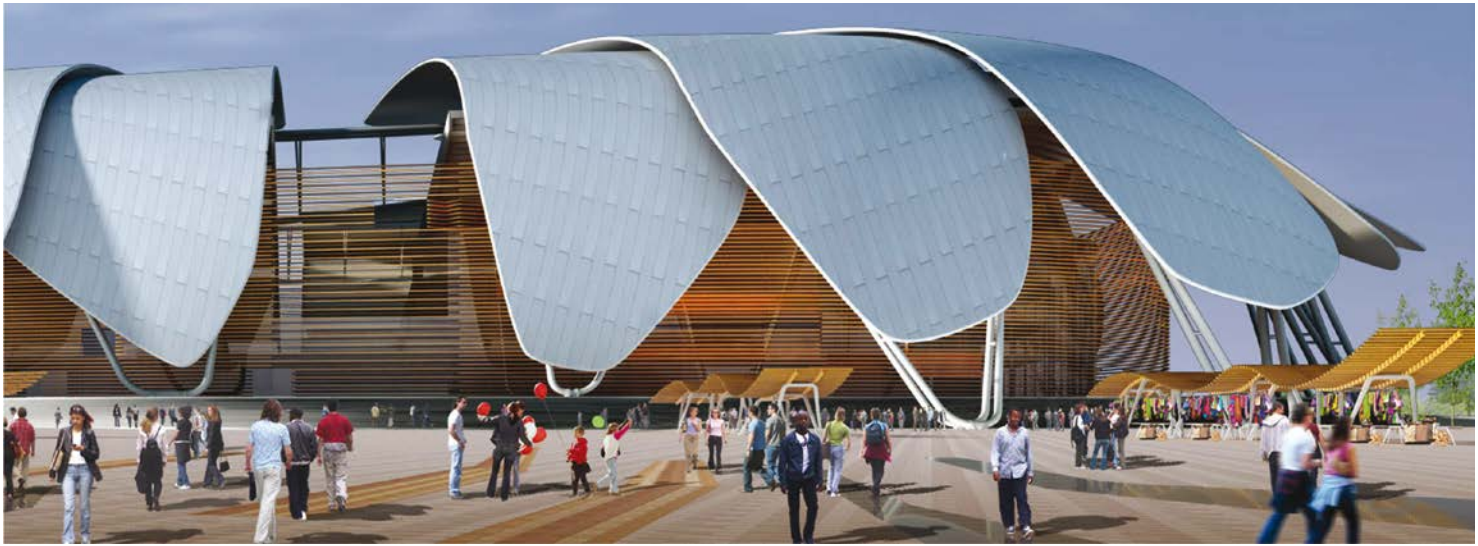
Cape Town Station, Makeka Design Lab lead architect



Thusong Service Centre in Khayelitsha, South Africa, designed by Makeka Design Lab







Design for Cape Town World Cup Stadium (Greenpoint Stadium) by Makeka Design Lab with HOK sport architecture, blueprint architects and Albertyn Viljoen Nortje Architects

Mohamed Elshahed:
"Why this conference, and why now? There is a reason this conference is happening today, not three years ago, not four years ago, which has to do with this moment of transition and revolt that happened in 2011, and I think to go on with business as usual, whether we're talking about the profession of architecture, or ... the intellectual framing of architecture and urbanism in the Egyptian context, would be a missed opportunity."

Khaled Fahmy
"We are in a moment of revolution, and the Revolution has not yet produced any new theories or specific demands regarding the management of our cities. However, it has given birth to ... movements. Our movements in the streets, and the movements of ... the counter-Revolution ... The fences that have been built and the walls that are being built are to limit citizens' movements in public space and to control this space.

[...]

I think that Tahrir Square in particular is a good example of that. Tahrir Square was designed with the purpose – as in all our cities, in my opinion – specifically to prevent citizens from communicating with each other; and I think that what we have witnessed, particularly in Tahrir Square, is our success in claiming this public space as our own and turning it into a forum, and I think that this was a fundamental thing. And the Revolution ... has opened new horizons to talk about the city and the way to manage it."

A- Plenary Sessions

A-1 Urban Political Change: Southern Perspectives
A-2 Right to the City: Emergent Practices in Latin America
A-3 Cities in Transition: Public Engagement and Civic Design

Day One
Panel 2

A-2
Right to the City: Emergent Practices in Latin America

Heba Raouf Ezzat
Cairo University

Jennifer Bremer
Department of Public Policy and Administration, School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, AUC

Lindsey Sherman
Urban-Think Tank, Caracas/Zurich

Discussant:
Diane Singerman
Department of Government, American University, Washington D.C.
TADAMUN
Cairo Urban Solidarity Initiative

Right to the City: Emergent Practices in Latin America

The issue of the "right to the city," a term first made popular by Henri Lefebvre in 1968,[1] has become increasingly evident in the southern region, most recently in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. This panel, the second of the opening day, presented various manifestations of this concept from Egypt, Venezuela, Peru and Brazil. From the struggle over public space as a forum for expression and political change; to the mediation between grassroots and government; to the empowerment of people through win-win financial collaborations between community, government and financial institutions; this panel presented emergent practices from the South.

Introduced by moderator Diane Singerman, Associate Professor in the Department of Government at American University, this panel was grounded in the Cairo context by Heba Raouf Ezzat, a public intellectual, writer and professor of political theory at Cairo University where she has published widely on issues of citizenship and women in politics.

Ezzat outlined the inextricable importance of space and place in the discussion of citizenship, stating: "Citizenship cannot be separated from cities, because cities are the manifestation of existential, political, social, economic needs and rights and duties." Throughout her discussion she presented three concepts from the work of UC Berkeley's Nezar ElSayyad: hybridity as a model to understand the city and spaces of power; the fundamentalist city; and medieval citizenship.

Ezzat went on to discuss the phenomenon of spontaneity, particularly as applied to the case of Cairo. Referring to the work of David Sims, she presented

> [...] how people resort to creating their own spaces and running their own places, so the flows of power change and the state becomes marginalized rather than the people becoming marginalized. They simply marginalize the state in their life and go on, starting from sewage to urban informal housing to parallel education to transportation and everything; the *toktoks* and the tiny little tricycles that are all over the place. Flows of power and flows of influence change, and the whole map changes. Where can we then, and how can we then understand that the political has been, over many years in Egypt, informalized, or the informal politicized?

Lindsey Sherman, Project Architect at Urban-Think Tank (U-TT), presented an alternative view of urban development that she termed "The Syncretic City." She summarized this position as one whereby we can "learn from the existing city and translate this existing knowledge into new possible futures and design thinking modes outside conventional models."

Sherman presented a critique of the rapid urbanization of the world's cities, primarily in the informal sectors, and the growing problems this breeds; failing mobility systems, inequality in resource distribution, inaccessibility, poor environmental conditions and skewed dialogue across the social, political and economic realms. She posited that it is essential today to regard growing arenas of informality as being full of potential, rather than as pockets of urban dissent, to be ignored and endured until they can be eradicated.

In her presentation of the case of U-TT's work in Caracas, Sherman illustrated how they work with these very potentials. She discussed the advantages of placing their practice in the middle ground between top-down or formal processes and bottom-up or informal practices; and the unique platform this creates. She presented their "Syncretic City" philosophy as such a platform, which calls on architecture to evolve not from "exclusion to inclusion but from exclusion to collaboration ... a productive coexistence of different forces, where a new city can be built in, on and with the old."

This philosophy is clearly illustrated through U-TT's *MetroCable* project in San Agustín, Caracas. This project not only plugs into an existing formal transportation system but also allows the almost surgical insertion of services and a social network in what they call an "integrative infrastructure." This project replaces the government-planned access road, providing more accessibility to the inhabitants of the neighborhood, while preserving their homes, increasing their safe mobility and providing much needed services at each landing point of the cable stations as plug-in programs.

Jennifer Bremer, Associate Professor of Public Policy and Chair of the Public Policy and Administration Department at AUC, addressed the public policy perspective on the growing informality of cities in her presentation of case studies from Latin America. She began by presenting the growing informality in Cairo, and across the globe, as a phenomenon that is quickly migrating from one of exception to one of majority. She introduced the concept of urban upgrading in its various forms, be it infrastructure upgrading, housing upgrading, services upgrading or even the securing of tenure.

In her presentation Bremer quoted Cities Alliance stating that

> The upgrading of slums is not limited to housing construction or upgrading of existing buildings, the social component of the entire process is key, with the ultimate objective being the guarantee of access to life skills and to better living conditions, we're talking about people, we're not talking about buildings.

She went on to summarize this philosophy whereby

> 1) the slum dweller becomes the citizen; 2) the shack becomes the house, and 3) the slum becomes the suburb.

In the first Latin American upgrading example presented Bremer summarized key issues: defining the community; sustainability; coverage; implementation; and financing. Beginning with the example of the Institute for Liberty and Democracy in Peru, a legislative approach to upgrading was presented. By streamlining and simplifying the tenure process, the *Organismo de Formalisatión de la Propiedad Informal* (COFOPRI) aimed to secure titles for one million citizens in informal areas, and exceeded that target by 300,000 titles.

In her second example she outlined the Brazilian *Favela-Bairro* Program. The main objectives of this project were to provide urban improvements, particularly urban infrastructure, and to create and provide access to urban facilities for social benefits. The total cost was $300 million, funded largely by the Inter American Development Bank, with equal contribution from the city. The services they provided included training centers for artisans, schools, hostels and government facilities among many others.

Finally Bremer concluded with *Patrimonio Hoy*, a program initiated by cement giant CEMEX. This program built on the realization that 40 percent of CEMEX sales were to individuals who were constructing their own homes. In response to this, the company began providing microcredit and technical assistance to home-builders to improve their homes as well as low-cost materials from other building materials companies.

1: Lefebvre, H., 1968 *Le Droit à la ville*, Paris: Anthropos (2nd ed.); Paris: Ed. du Seuil, Collection "Points".

The Syncretic City:
Building Inclusivity

Lindsey Sherman

The contemporary city has undergone unprecedented urbanization in recent history. As a result, the continued expansion of urban territory has led to various challenges – such as failing mobility systems, unequal distribution of resources, an acute asymmetry in social, economic, and political engagement, and the rapid expansion of informal settlements. Knowing these struggles, we must ask ourselves: What do we do with this information? How does this inform our process of design?

We know that these informal communities challenge the capacities, resources, and resilience of the urban footprint. But at the same time, these areas have the potential for new trajectories of design. Urban-Think Tank (U-TT)'s practice focuses on the territory between the formal and informal, realizing that this zone can serve as a new point of contact for architecture in the city. The critical territory is more than physical space, but the territory of critical thinking as well. Ultimately, we need to use this interface to build a new framework – one that allows us to read, evaluate, and, most importantly, act in the city – with both socially and ecologically sustainable solutions.

The space between is a unique platform for the integration of formal and informal, where top-down planning can meet bottom-up initiatives. Therefore, this is not an evolution from exclusion to inclusion, but from exclusion to collaboration. And that is our starting point for design – the Syncretic City.

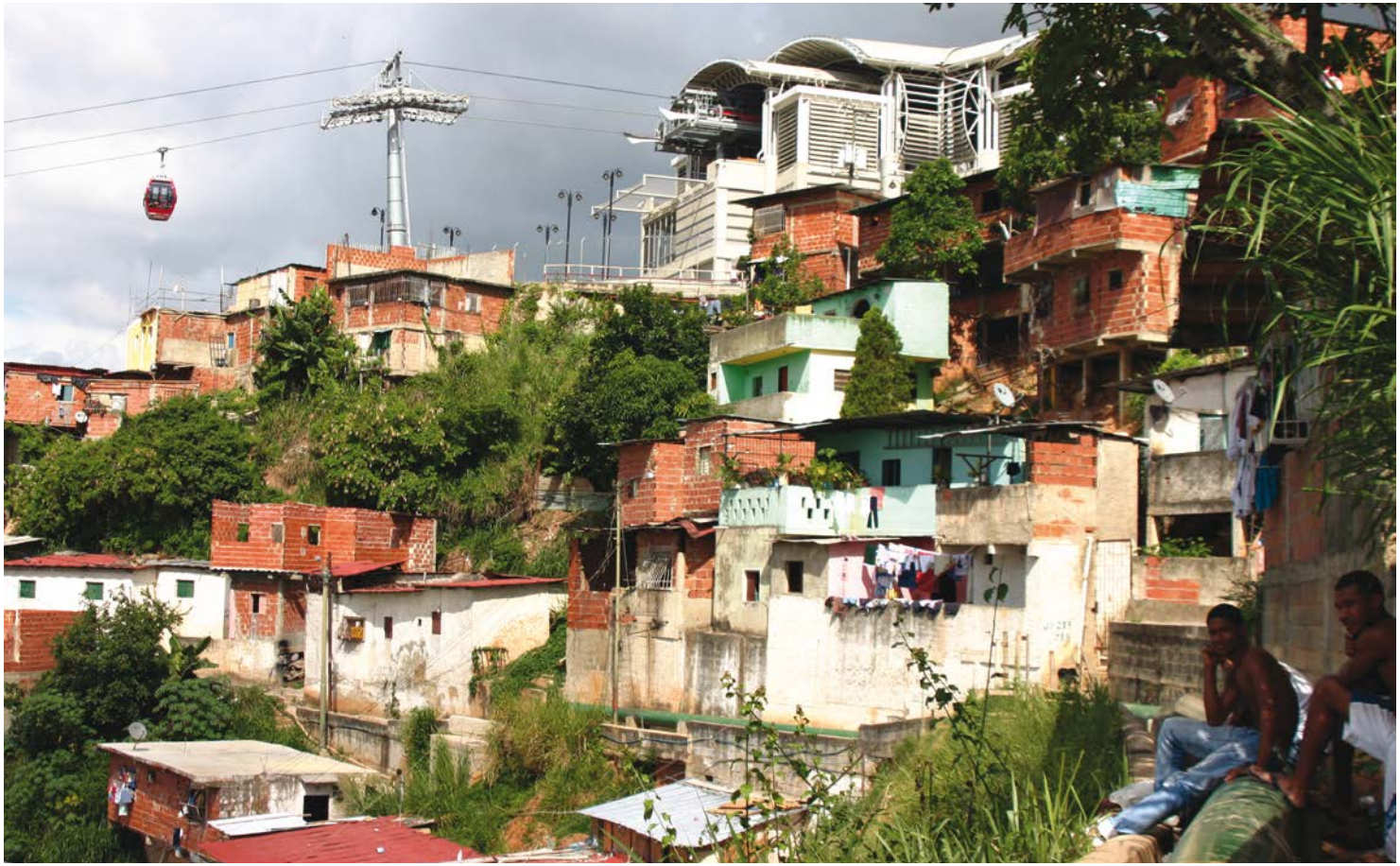
The Syncretic City is one that allows oppositional ideas to coexist without a homogenizing or equalizing effect. In other words, the Syncretic City is a productive coexistence of different forces, where the new city will be built on, in, and with the old.

The *MetroCable*, *Centro de Açcao Social por Música*, and the *Torre David* research projects frame this idea of the Syncretic City, illustrating a productive co-existence of formal and informal.

The *MetroCable* is located in the San Agustín neighborhood in Caracas, Venezuela. It is a cable car system that ties into the existing public transportation in order to provide access to the inhabitants that live in very difficult terrain. Simultaneously, it acts as a framework to insert ecological, economic, and social viability into the community in the form of plug-in programs.

The Centro de Açcao Social por Música is located in Paraisópolis, Sao Paulo's second largest *favela*. Located in a dangerous high-risk zone, the project proposes to transform an inaccessible void into a productive and dynamic public space. With the introduction of the terraced landscape, urban agriculture, and a new performing arts center that hovers over a sports field/auditorium, *the Centro de Açcao Social por Música* provides immediate forms of social and cultural exchange, while simultaneously serving as a catalyst that encourages new uses. It is an adaptable framework that encourages flexibility and a critical re-thinking of the design process.

Torre David is an abandoned and subsequently invaded 45-story office tower in Caracas, Venezuela that is now home to over 3,000 people. In the trajectory of urban research on informality, Torre David presents a shift from the marginalized fringes of the city to the urban core and existing structures. The tower is a formal structure that has hosted informal growth and incremental development since 2007, pointing the way to new urban models and design as process. Torre David represents the territory between formal and informal: the Syncretic City.

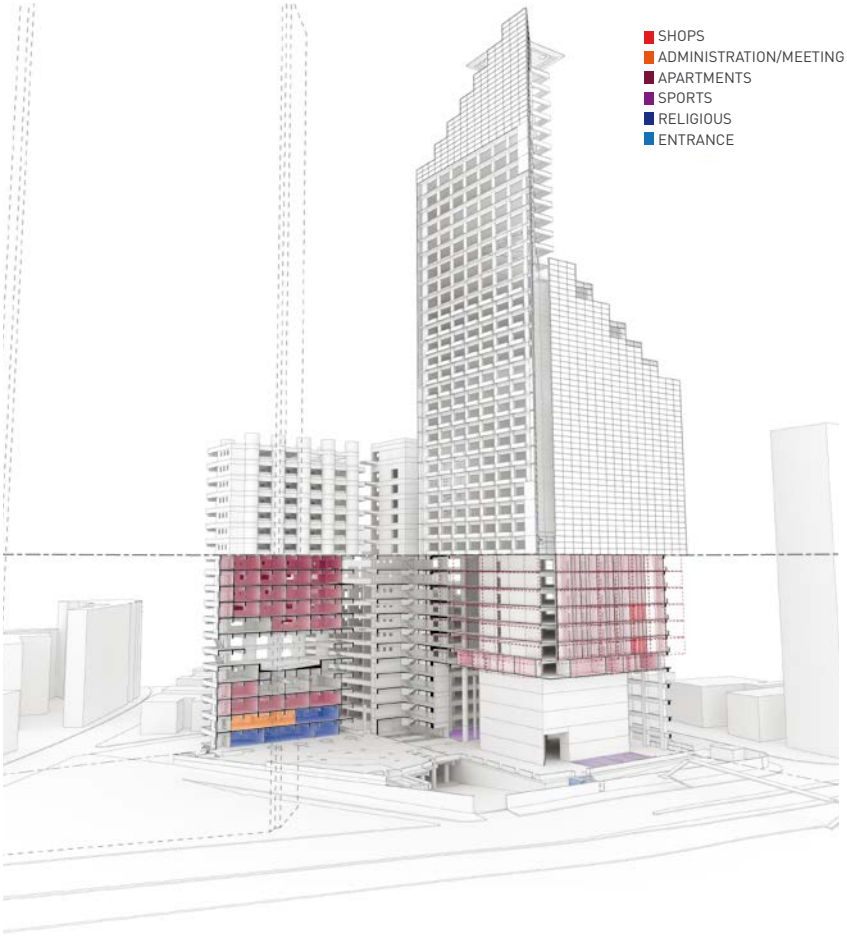


The *MetroCable* sits along the ridge of the San Agustín neighborhood. The system is comprised of five stations, moving 1,200 people per hour. Two stations connect into the existing public transit system, providing a direct link to the formal city, while the three stations along the mountain ridge meet demands of community access and provide missing social infrastructure.



The Centro de Acçao Social por Música is a dynamic hub that provides necessary public space in an overly dense neighborhood. The terraces provide a framework to integrate previously fragmented areas with new social infrastructure and diverse programs to strengthen collective identity and ensure positive growth for the future.





Torre David presents a shift from a separation of informal settlements and the formal city to an informal settlement occupying a formal structure. The tower presents new modes of thinking and new ways to organize space and building systems.

Informal Area Upgrading:
The Latin American Experience

Jennifer Bremer

Latin American experience offers a number of models that can inform the upgrading of informal areas in Egypt. While no model can or should be imported unquestioningly or without careful consideration of local conditions, successes with informal area development in Latin America can be mined for concepts, models, and lessons learned with potential relevance to other regions and specifically to Egypt.

Upgrading must be conceptualized as a multi-faceted process in which housing and improvement of the housing stock is just one element. Other elements include: infrastructure upgrading (water, power, roads, etc.); financing and consulting to guide self-help upgrading of existing housing stock; insertion of government services – particularly education and health; formalization of tenure through titling projects; economic activities and efforts to upgrade the "investor micro-climate"; better governance through normalization of the government's presence; strengthening social capital and accountability to build citizenship; and efforts to improve security through greater police presence, respect for human rights, and control of crime.

Throughout the upgrading process in Egypt, three considerations must be borne in mind: the role of government is key but it is not the only factor; informal areas are diverse communities, not just a collection of housing stock, and housing is not the main issue in most Egyptian informal areas. As emphasized by David Sims, the quality of housing is generally acceptable; the main problems are the lack of services and the failure to integrate informal areas into the broader community, physically, institutionally, and socially.[1]

The World Bank-managed Cities Alliance makes the important point that, with successful slum upgrading, three processes occur simultaneously over time: 1) the slum dweller becomes the citizen; 2) the shack becomes the house, and 3) the slum becomes the suburb. These processes are evident in the three Latin American examples I discussed in the *Learning from Cairo* conference.

In considering these examples, my presentation attempted to address six aspects of program design:

- The institutional approach to working with the community:
  Who is the counterpart?
- Sustainability:
  Did the intervention bring permanent improvement or was it short-lived?
- Coverage:
  Is the solution scalable or dependent on donor initiatives?
- Approach to "illegality":
  Was a solution introduced or did the program work around this issue?
- Implementation:
  What was the role of government and non-government actors?
- Financing:
  Who is paying for what?

The three Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) experiences examined included titling in Peru, the Rio de Janeiro *favela* experience in Brazil, and Mexico's *Patrimonio Hoy*.

The Peruvian experience revolved around distribution of formal titles to residents in informal areas, as long advocated by Hernando de Soto of the Institute for Liberty and Democracy (ILD). This program was implemented by a national agency, *El Organismo de Formalización de la Propiedad Informal* (COFOPRI) following a six-year effort of research and pilot projects to put legal reform in place by the ILD. The new law simplified tenure, reducing the role of the notary, which is also a key barrier to formalization in Egypt. It was not cheap, however, and required a US$ 38-million World Bank loan to implement. It also had strong political support, as shown by the goal of one million titles set by the President. Endo identified five factors underpinning the success:[2]

- Property rights should be set using customary proofs of ownership, community participation, and simplified rules.

- Formalistic, bureaucratic procedures should be eliminated (for all, if possible).
- Technology and procedures to record property should be simple, robust, and upgradable.
- Incentives should be used to keep property formal over time.
- Political support can be mobilized by showing benefits to social justice.

Despite some negative aspects and evidence of backsliding to serve powerful interests' desire for land, there were important achievements, according to Endo:[3]

- 1.3 million registered titles were distributed to individuals between 1996 and 2002.
- Formalization time was cut from almost seven years to 45 days.
- Administrative steps were cut from 207 to 30.
- Offices involved were cut from 54 offices to four.
- Average cost was cut from US$ 2,156 to US$ 49.

Lessons for Cairo and Egypt more generally to be drawn from this experience include the importance of finding a way to secure titles to informal area residents. We should be mindful, however, that security is in the eye of the beholder and a formal title may not be what is needed. We should also bear in mind that gains can be eroded by powerful interests. We need to ask ourselves who is "eying" the land under the informal areas? Progress made in Jordan and Turkey was subsequently undercut by land-grabbing elites under the "money talks" principle. Finally, organization is key. This aspect, a strength of the Peruvian model, remains a mysterious missing element in Egypt, indicating that this may or may not be a solution that can be scaled up in Egypt.

Brazil's *Favela Bairro* program is generally regarded as a highly successful model. The approach was first adopted in 1993, with the key objectives of: providing urban improvements, primarily urban infrastructure; creating and providing access to urban facilities for social benefits; integrating *favelas* into the urban fabric; and consolidating each *favela* as a neighborhood.

Housing improvement was not the center of this initiative. Instead, the City established complementary land ownership and income generation programs. Like the Peruvian experience, the *Favela Bairro* project required a serious resource commitment, a total of US$ 300 million, of which the Inter-American Development Bank provided US$ 180 million and the City of Rio de Janeiro US$ 120 million. The program served a population of 250,000 in 60 *favelas* (a cost of more than US$ 1000 per person).

The principal elements included completing or constructing main urban infrastructure, upgrades to make the *favela* more like a "normal" neighborhood, and adding visual symbols of the formal city to identify it as a neighborhood, such as paved streets, plazas, urban furniture, and public services. The program was implemented in a way that included the *favelas* in the planning process of the city. It expanded social activities, such as daycare centers, income generation projects, training, and sports; and legalized land subdivisions through land titles.

Lessons for Egypt include the importance of a multi-sectoral approach to raise quality of life and its consequent need to bring in multiple agencies. We should note, however, the inability to implement this model without mobilizing local funds and delegating decision-making to local government (*not* local administration) to achieve true collaboration with the residents.

The final experience demonstrates how a creative corporate approach can finance the efforts of informal area residents to upgrade their own housing and achieve scale by generating profits for the company as well as value for the residents. The building materials company CEMEX's *Patrimonio Hoy* (Family Wealth Today) program was based on the company's recognition that self-construction accounted for 40 percent of its sales and was less subject to decline in an economic downturn. Based on several years of experimentation, CEMEX developed a model using local promoters (mostly women) to manage small loans to informal homeowners, coupled with technical assistance and the facilitation access to a low-cost package of inputs.

Participants built homes three times faster than others, the average cost at only half the national average. Home values rose 20 percent as a result of the improvements, and many jobs were created for local craftspeople as well as the promoters. One third of the homeowners used the expansion to launch a business. On the downside, only about one third fully completed the project.

Since 2000, affordable solutions have enabled more than one million people throughout LAC to improve their homes. The program has advanced more than US$ 135 million in microcredit and 400,000 families have been assisted to build or expand their own homes. A new (but not as yet financially scalable) model offers microloans to help neighborhoods pave streets and make other improvements.

This example demonstrates the potential to mobilize companies on a for-profit basis, the tremendous importance of self-help input from the residents themselves, and the potential to reach scale through partnerships that bring together the government, the residents, international donors, and private companies.

Heba Raouf Ezzat

"Citizenship cannot be separated from cities, because cities are the manifestation of existential, political, social, economic needs and rights and duties."

1: Sims, D., 2010. *Understanding Cairo: The Logic of a City Out of Control*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.
2: Ibid.
3: Endo, V., 2004. *Managing Investment Climate Reforms: The Peru Urban Land Reform Case Study*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Diane Singerman:
"I wanted to start off with Heba [Raouf Ezzat]'s comment when she said 'Without a public you can't build a republic' ... You were talking about working on, is it law? Is it patronage? Is it community? ... My question becomes about the political will and the political demands, and we heard earlier this morning about, will the government hear claims with empathy? That's a great question. Where is the empathy? But also, where is the claims-making? And where are the claims coming from? And what's the basis of the claims, because you're saying, 'Well, it's not really law anymore,' there has been a sort of overturning of 'we're taking to the street,' but what that street means and who can claim it is quite different, and the street vendors are claiming the street. We have lots of other spaces that people have claimed, so we have an experience of people claiming the street, and lots of political will and political mobilization, and obviously there's the difference between starting a revolution and completing a revolution, even if it was a revolution, right? So, the question becomes about mobilization."

Heba Raouf Ezzat:
"The political war at the moment is a role between two rationales: the rationale of squatters, and the rationale of gated communities. This is how you can explain a lot of things in Egyptian politics today, and that spontaneity and agency are ... one of the achievements of the change that took place. But at the same time people have to learn, not how to seize opportunities, but how to share opportunities ... We have different territories of imaginations, basically, and I always say that the brilliance of Arabic language is that the same word refers to judgment and government: *al ʿhukm* is judgment and government. And I think that as you said ... we have a problem with reaching the minimum basis of judgment before we embark on disagreeing on how to govern, and this is one of the dilemmas in the situation of Egypt today."

Diane Singerman:
"In political science, we talk about clientelism all the time, we talk about patronage, we talk about different communities ... Building architects need clients and so it's very interesting to me how people mobilize in order to get the kind of design competitions that you're talking about in South America. How people mobilize in order to get a new incredibly innovative cable car built to solve a very basic problem people have been talking about probably in Venezuela for a very long time. So, to me, the question is, can we get the state to think like revolutionaries? And can we get revolutionaries to think like the state?"

Lindsey Sherman :
"Typically in our work we don't have a client when we start our project, or we use the community as a client, because we really try to go into these areas and assess the actual needs, what are the problems, what are the potentials that we can get from this area, and what can we design that improves it from the inside out. So we don't work as a political agency, but more as a kind of an animator of change, somebody who's really trying to stimulate. And then once we've produced a project, then we try to get somebody to build it, and this is for sure a difficulty. And with the cable car it was bit easier because [Hugo] Chávez used it as a political instrument. Once we designed it, we handed it over to him, it became Chávez's cable car for the people, so I mean this is also a difficult thing, but for us it doesn't matter, because it was built. So that's the real thing there. But I think that figuring out how we begin to fuse top-down bottom-up [planning] is a really important thing,"

A- Plenary Sessions

A-1 Urban Political Change: Southern Perspectives
A-2 Right to the City: Emergent Practices in Latin America
A-3 Cities in Transition: Public Engagement and Civic Design

Day One
Panel 3

A-3

Cities in Transition:
Public Engagement and Civic Design

David Sims
author of *Understanding Cairo: The Logic of a City Out of Control*

Damon Rich
Division of Planning and Community Development, Newark, NJ

Gregers Tang Thomsen and Selva Gürdoğan
Superpool, Istanbul

Discussant:
Ayman Ismail
Department of Management, School of Business, AUC

Cities in Transition: Public Engagement and Civic Design

Addressing cities in transition, from the megacities Cairo and Istanbul, to Newark, the largest city in the State of New Jersey with a population of just 300,000, this session interrogated a range of questions attendant to public engagement and civic design: from "How to produce a public?" to "Do cities have a life span?"

Damon Rich, Chief Urban Designer for the city of Newark, spoke of his role as a "cheerleader for local democracy" and the necessity for designers and architects to use the tools available to them to "make the processes of governance more transparent, accessible, and manipulable." Citing Saul Alinsky's notion of "building power" in his discussion of what it means to produce a public, Rich addressed urban designers' attempts in Newark "to weave together the people in the city to produce outcomes," as well as the perspective of city residents who, when they found their needs were not being met by the municipal government, formed constituencies, and learned "the nuts and bolts of making demands and holding governments accountable."

Rich presented examples of his work in Newark creating tools to "break down processes by which planning and development happen in the city," to produce a collective notion of how things work. Community-based projects he spearheaded include the creation of a physical model of the city by Newark residents, who worked with local architecture students to recreate the buildings in their neighborhood. Rich highlighted the way in which this workshop generated "a narrative beyond the fact of people coming together," by registering this act in the physicality of the design itself. From engaging community and school groups in the creation of public art on city walls, to a campaign to redesign the waterfront that seeks to engage two percent of all Newarkers, the projects Rich presented embodied his vision of urban designers as advocates for citizen engagement. He concluded by outlining his view of urban designers as "one group amongst a very diverse field looking for unexpected collaborations in order to make the city that we want."

David Sims gave an overview of informal urban development in greater Cairo. In contrast to development trends since January 2011, including worsening traffic and a lack of investment in road infrastructure; crises and stalled real estate development in the new towns; and the slow progress of Metro Line Three; Sims pointed out that informal urban development, already dominant, has accelerated considerably.

Sims spoke of the multiple reasons for informality working well in Cairo, including informal developments' advantageous locations (forming a ring around the formal city) for residents commuting to jobs and accessing business opportunities. In addition he argued that these densely built areas "beat new towns for sustainable urban development."

Sims argued that today up to 85 percent, if not more, of the increase in population of greater Cairo is in informal areas, with remittances sent to Egypt from abroad being invested in these developments. He concluded that the future of Cairo, in terms of people and employment, is in informal areas, which he anticipates will eventually be provided with infrastructure services by the state.

Gregers Tang Thomsen and Selva Gürdoğan of Superpool spoke of the similarities between Cairo and their home city of Istanbul, with respect to the lack of local administrative capacity to engage communities in planning, and the need for small architecture offices such as their own to provide ideas to fill such gaps. They presented two lines of their work, one related to transportation and mapping, the other to zoning rules with respect to informal housing projects currently undergoing formalization.

Superpool displayed the map they created of Istanbul's *dolmuş* minibuses, a widely used network of transportation that the city does not include in its smart ticket system. While the Istanbul transportation authorities have

produced their own *dolmuş* maps, they have not made these available to the public, allegedly because they were unable to produce a legible specimen, yet also indicative of their lack of investment in this alternative transportation system. Superpool expressed their interest in *dolmuş* minibuses as an archetype for flexible, shared modes of transportation. They emphasized the efficiency of these shared systems, with one minibus replacing the equivalent of 20 cars on the road.

Presenting their work undertaken as part of the *Audi Urban Future Initiative*, on the future of mobility in Istanbul, Superpool explored the shared minibus system as a model from the past that can inform the future. They proposed an interactive system, *Park*™ that would link transportation systems to public space through an online loyalty program. Addressing issues of traffic, mobility, community building, and public participation, *Park*™ promoted an engaging way to communally manage public space, at a time when debates over city plans for public spaces, including Taksim Square, were beginning to rage.

Superpool ended their presentation with an overview of a collaboration they are participating in with a number of young architecture offices, organized by an agency by the name of Urban Strategy, to explore changes in Kağıthane, an informal neighborhood that has been formalized over time through government intervention. In response to what they termed "questionable" urban renewal policies, these young firms have on their own initiative prepared design guidelines for the municipality, in an effort to redress inequitable rebuilding precedents.

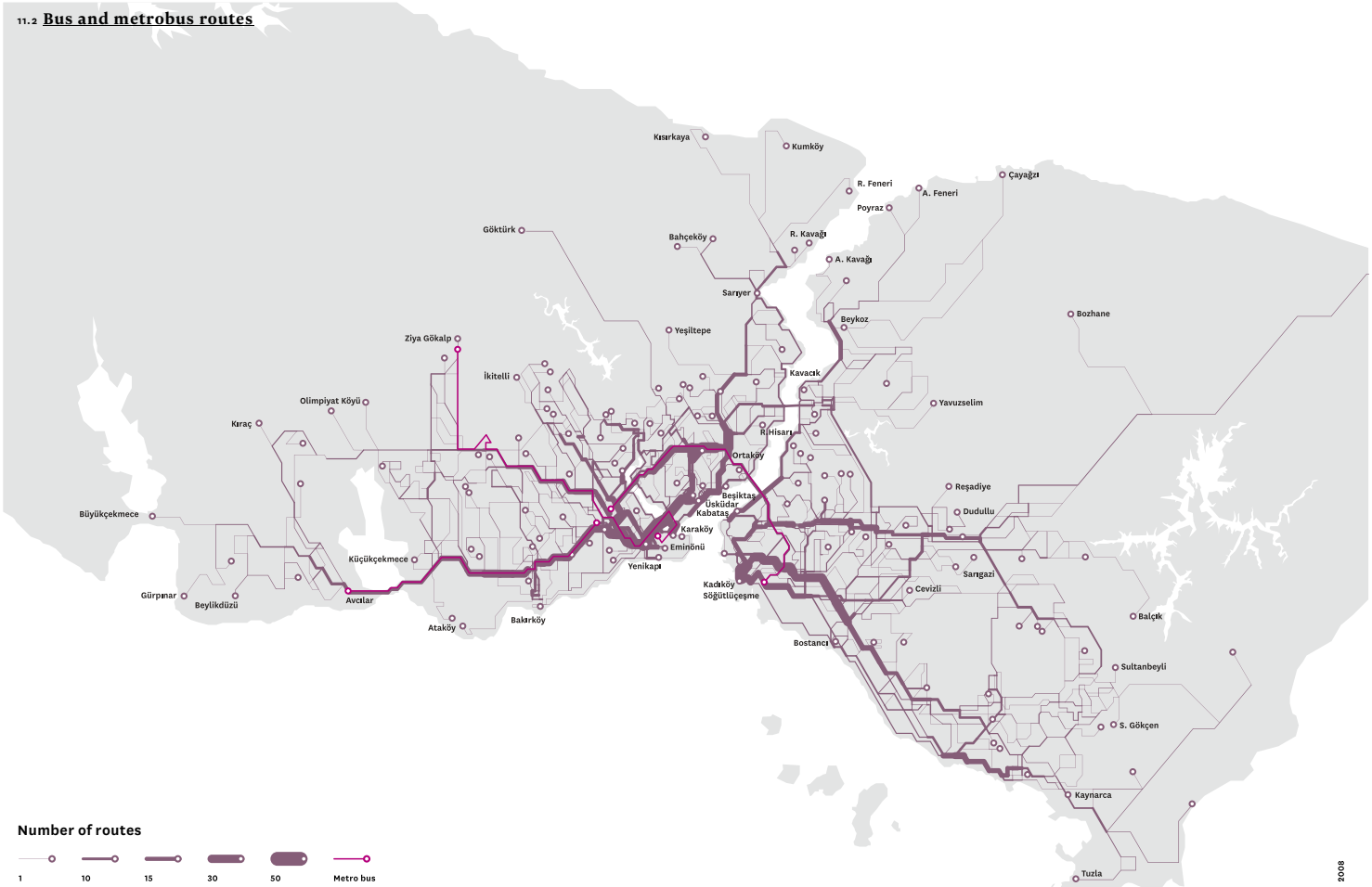
Ayman Ismail, as moderator, concluded the session by warning against the adoption of narrative extremes in planning: from visions of urban renewal, such as *Cairo 2050*, that promote demolishing "slums," to the other narrative extreme, which romanticizes informal areas. He advocated for a pragmatic narrative that takes into account present demographic and physical realities, as a means for identifying new solutions that provide for a mix of upgrading, new developments, transportation, and parks in Cairo.

Mapping Istanbul

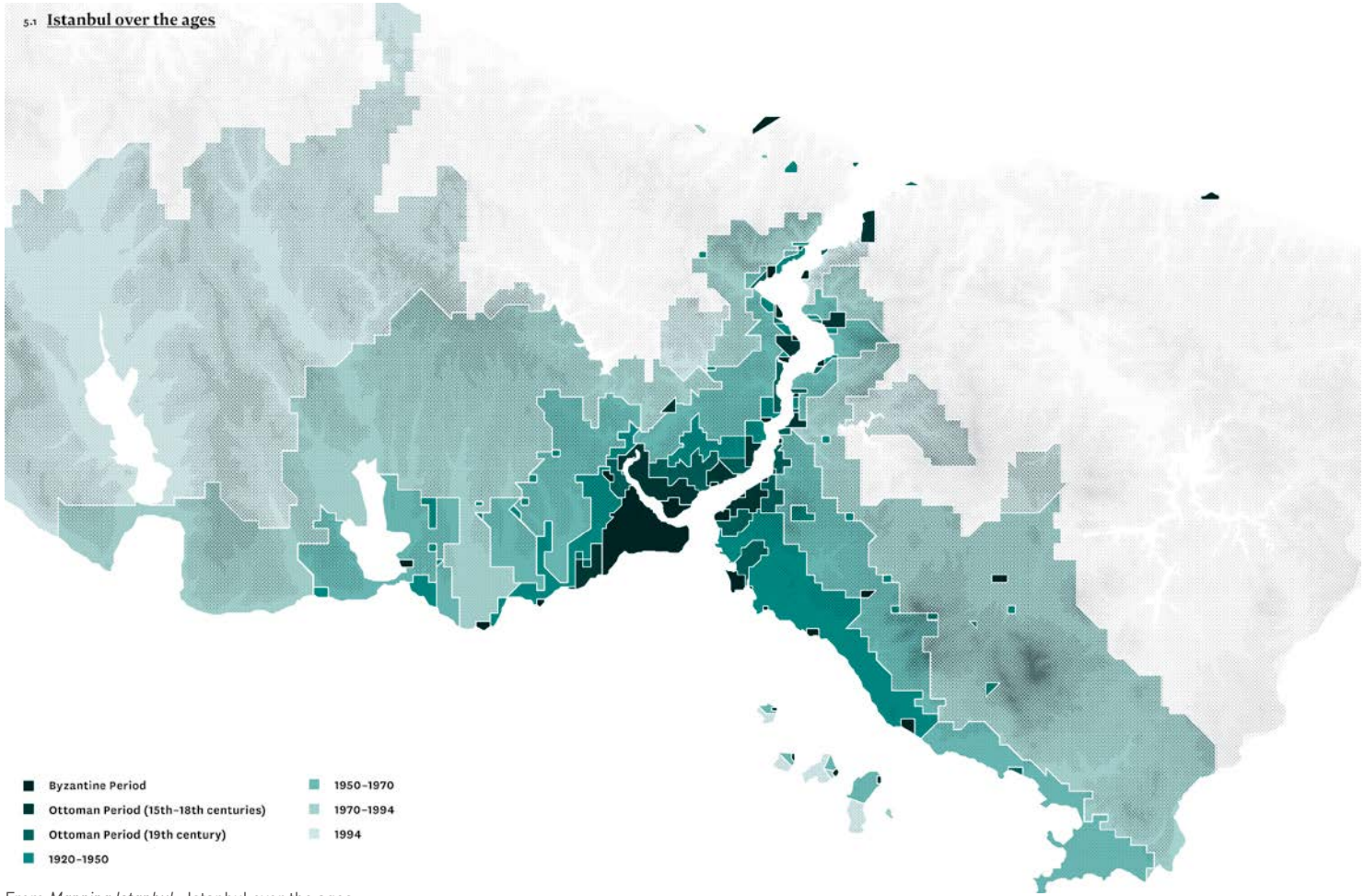
Superpool (Selva Gürdoğan and Gregers Tang Thomsen)



11.2 **Bus and metrobus routes**



From *Mapping Istanbul*: Istanbul bus and minibus routes.



From *Mapping Istanbul*: Istanbul over the ages

Understanding Cairo's Informal Development

David Sims

Greater Cairo is one of a small but growing number of 15 million-plus cities in the developing world. Although each is unique, these megacities all have certain traits and challenges in common. Greater Cairo has its share of these commonalities, and in some ways it represents an extreme case, especially when looking at the dynamics of informal urban development. This short piece tries to describe briefly Cairo's informal areas in order to provide a factual overview of a phenomenon that is much discussed but poorly understood.

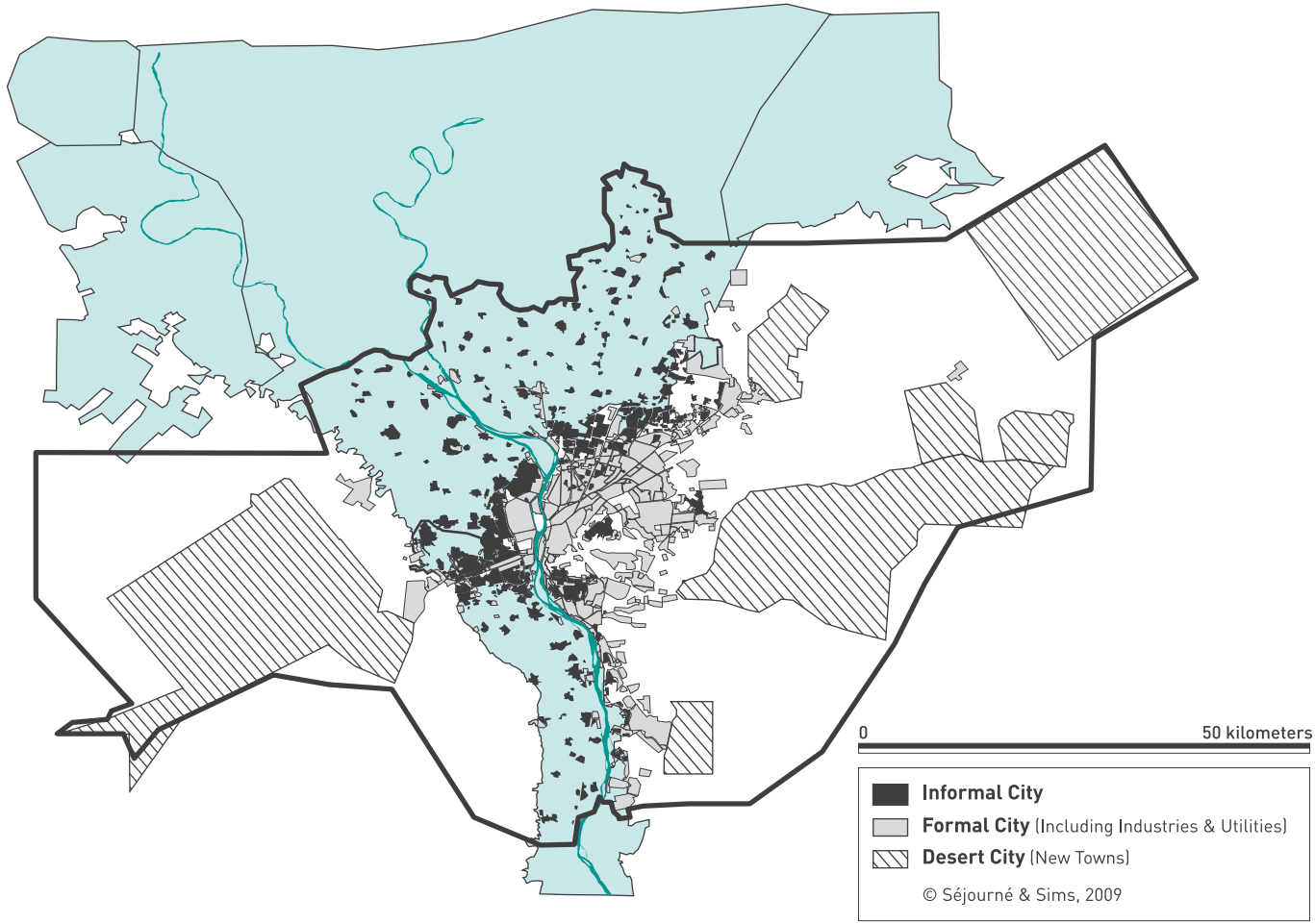
It is best to divide Greater Cairo into its component parts. These are: the *formal* city (including all of the city up to 1950 as well as institutions, utilities, and industries); the desert city (seven new towns first established in the late 1970s and 1980s in the desert both east and west of the metropolis as well as other recent desert real estate ventures); and the *informal* city (mainly small-scale residential buildings that first appeared in the 1960s and were developed without permits or zoning, mainly on private agricultural land on the metropolitan fringes and near existing villages). In official terms, these areas are called "unplanned zones," but to most they are termed *'ashwa'iyat*. Figure 1 shows these three components of Greater Cairo as of 2006.

Calculations have been made to measure the scale of informal development in Greater Cairo. Using the 2006 census results and satellite imagery it was found that almost 64 percent of the population of the metropolis lived in informal areas, including those in the fast growing peri-urban hinterland of Giza and al-Qalyubiya Governorates. Formal Cairo on the other hand contained only 28 percent of the population, and the new desert cities, which the government has targeted for almost all new urban expansion, only accounted for 3.7 percent of the population. Even more startling, it was estimated that over the 1996-2006 period, informal areas absorbed 78 percent of the total population increase of Greater Cairo.[1]

Informal development has been a feature of Greater Cairo's urban dynamic for decades. It can be estimated that even in 1986, informal areas contained over 40 percent of the total population of the metropolis. It would seem that such an astounding proportion would have forced government planners to accept reality and rethink their strategies. But the Egyptian government was, and still is, in a difficult position. It tried to prohibit such development with a series of laws and penalties, and when these had no effect it simply produced more draconian proscriptions. How could the state do otherwise, since to recognize and legalize informal areas would force it to admit its whole urban strategy, and its underlying legitimacy, were bankrupt? So the 'problem' was largely ignored, but over time government authorities begrudgingly were forced to extend water, electricity and sewerage networks to most areas. These networks were poorly designed and soon became overburdened, and only a few roads were paved. Also, schools, open areas, and other public facilities remained scarce.

It is important to understand certain features of informal areas in Greater Cairo. They are not slums or shantytowns, but are largely made up of solidly-built concrete and red brick structures that represent tremendous efforts and financial sacrifices on the part of the owners. Small apartments are the norm (averaging 60 m^2) and building heights average five to six floors (although there is the recent phenomenon of one-off larger residential towers of up to 15 floors). The large majority of Cairo's affordable housing is to be found in these areas. Rental tenure is as popular as ownership and becoming more so. In Greater Cairo over 90 percent of informal neighborhoods are built on what had been privately-owned agricultural land, and only a small fraction originated as squatting on state desert lands. The inhabitants of these areas exhibit a range of socioeconomic characteristics and income levels that are close to the averages for urban Egypt. Marginal old areas with dilapidated structures and concentrations of grinding poverty are rarely to be found. It is these marginal areas, however, that are most often the focus of the media in speaking about the 'problems' of *'ashwa'iyat*.

Figure 1: Boundaries of Greater Cairo and its component parts, 2006.



Most informal areas of Greater Cairo are well located, with the majority within five to ten kilometers from the city center, as can be seen in Figure 2. Traffic access into some of these areas can be difficult, but in general they are well served for transport (privately owned micro-buses). Thus inhabitants can relatively easily access employment and business opportunities within the metropolis. In addition, the larger informal areas generate their own vibrant economies.

This is not to say that conditions in informal areas are rosy. The main problem is that the 'freestyle' form of construction (100 percent plot coverage) has led to inadequate light and air for many residential units, especially in older neighborhoods where additional floors continue to be built. Streets and lanes are rarely paved, trees and open space are almost nonexistent, and strewn rubbish is common. Public facilities, especially schools, are insufficient and in most cases terribly overcrowded. Although utilities exist in older areas, the systems are overloaded and failures are frequent. On a per capita basis, government expenditure on services to these informal areas is only a small fraction of that in formal areas of the city and especially in the new desert communities.[2]

What has been happening in Cairo's informal areas since the January 2011 Revolution? This is a much discussed question, especially in terms of community mobilization, new forms of representation and power, and conflicts over public space. One fact that needs underlining is that, with the collapse of much of the state's authority, building informally has become extremely popular. No one knows the full extent of this post-revolutionary activity, but the following anecdotes would seem to confirm that, if informal Cairo was already triumphant, it is now even more so.

First, reports by the Housing Directorate of Alexandria showed that before the Revolution, building violation and demolition orders were issued at a rate of 2471 per year. For 2011 and the first half of 2012 the rate jumped to 6331 cases per year, an increase of 2.5 times.

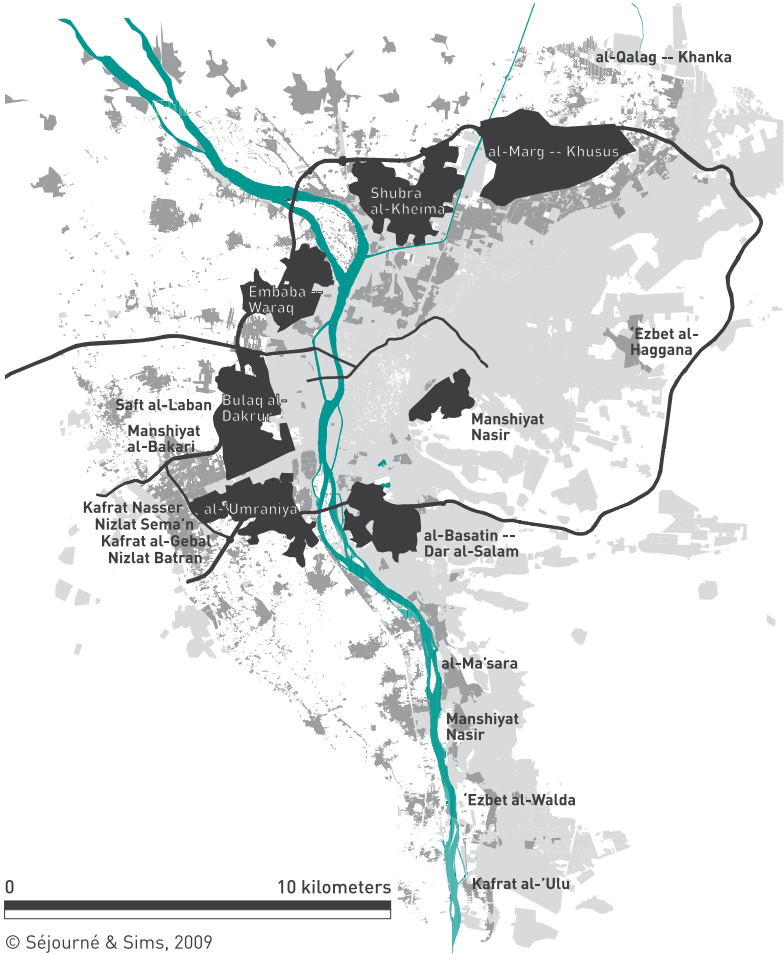
Secondly, an exercise using Google satellite images in one small fringe informal area of Giza showed that whereas new building footprints had been increasing at a rate of 700 m^2 per year in the eight years before January 2011, this rate jumped to 3150 m^2 per year after this date, an increase of four and a half times.

Remittances from Egyptians abroad have jumped since the Revolution – from US$ 7.8 billion in 2009 to US$ 19 billion in 2012 (of which US$ 8 billion came from Egyptians in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia). What is this remittance money being used for? Does it all go towards the daily expenditures of family relatives, or does a large chunk fuel the boom in informal development?

After all, to the 12 million current inhabitants of informal areas of Greater Cairo must be added tens of millions more found in other informal urban and peri-urban areas of Egypt. Some of these people are building fast.

1: For an explanation of these calculations of the components of Greater Cairo, see World Bank, Arab Republic of Egypt: *Building a Platform for Urban Upgrading in the Greater Cairo Region*, Draft final report, Sustainable Development Department, Middle East and North Africa Region, June 2012.
2: Informal areas of Greater Cairo are much more complex and dynamic than this simple summary can possibly portray, and those wishing a better understanding are encouraged to read further, either in World Bank (2012), GTZ (2009), or academic studies or Chapters 3 and 4 of my book *Understanding Cairo: The Logic of a City Out of Control* (paperback edition, AUC Press, 2012). The map of informal areas is from p. 127 of the latter.

Figure 2: Seven large informal agglomerations in Greater Cairo



© Séjourné & Sims, 2009

Clare Davies:
My question is for Dr. Sims: I have a methodological question. I am curious how people in this field understand a macro view of the megacity, of which Cairo is an example. Can you understand cities like this as having a life span? Is the current theory that these cities will continue to grow indefinitely and will somehow muddle through issues of sustainability? Or is there a kind of moment when like a dying star it becomes a sort of red giant and then implodes on itself because it just can't support issues like water supply, electricity or these very important issues? Is there an understanding of the lifespan of the megacity and does that have any impact on how people think about it in the present?

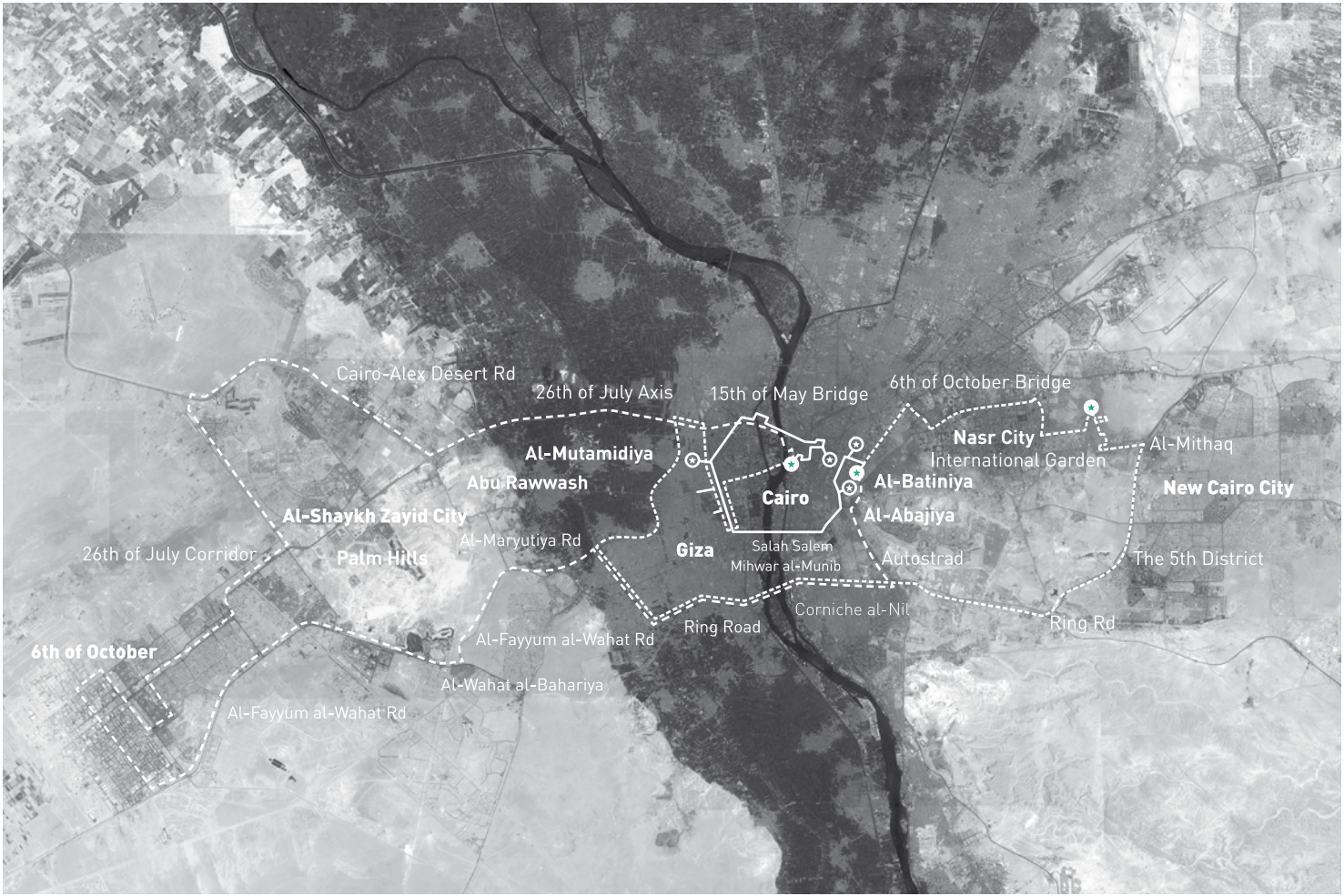
David Sims:
Imploding stars and megacities we don't know. We'll all be dead long before that. As far as I know every megacity... I'm talking third world stuff, your Jakartas and Mumbais, and your São Paulos and Istanbuls ... it's new territory. No one knows. In the 1950s and 1960s there was talk that a city could not have more than five million people because then it would have collapsed. But to look at a whole city is important because a lot of the systems are citywide. The road is a citywide system. Even though we have three traffic departments in Cairo. In reality these large cities function. The diseconomies of agglomeration have not yet outweighed the economies of agglomeration. But as you say, they muddle through.

B- Urban Tours

B-1 Urban Core

B-2 Desert Cities

B-3 Informal Belt


Cairo-Alex Desert Rd
26th of July Axis
15th of May Bridge
6th of October Bridge
Nasr City
International Garden
Al-Mithaq
New Cairo City
Al-Mutamidiya
Abu Rawwash
Cairo
Al-Batiniya
Al-Abajiya
Al-Shaykh Zayid City
26th of July Corridor
Palm Hills
Al-Maryutiya Rd
Giza
Salah Salem
Mihwar al-Munib
Autostrad
The 5th District
Corniche al-Nil
Ring Road
Ring Rd
6th of October
Al-Fayyum al-Wahat Rd
Al-Wahat al-Bahariya
Al-Fayyum al-Wahat Rd

Overview of Learning from Cairo Tour Itineraries



B- Urban Tours

B-1 Urban Core
B-2 Desert Cities
B-3 Informal Belt

Day Two

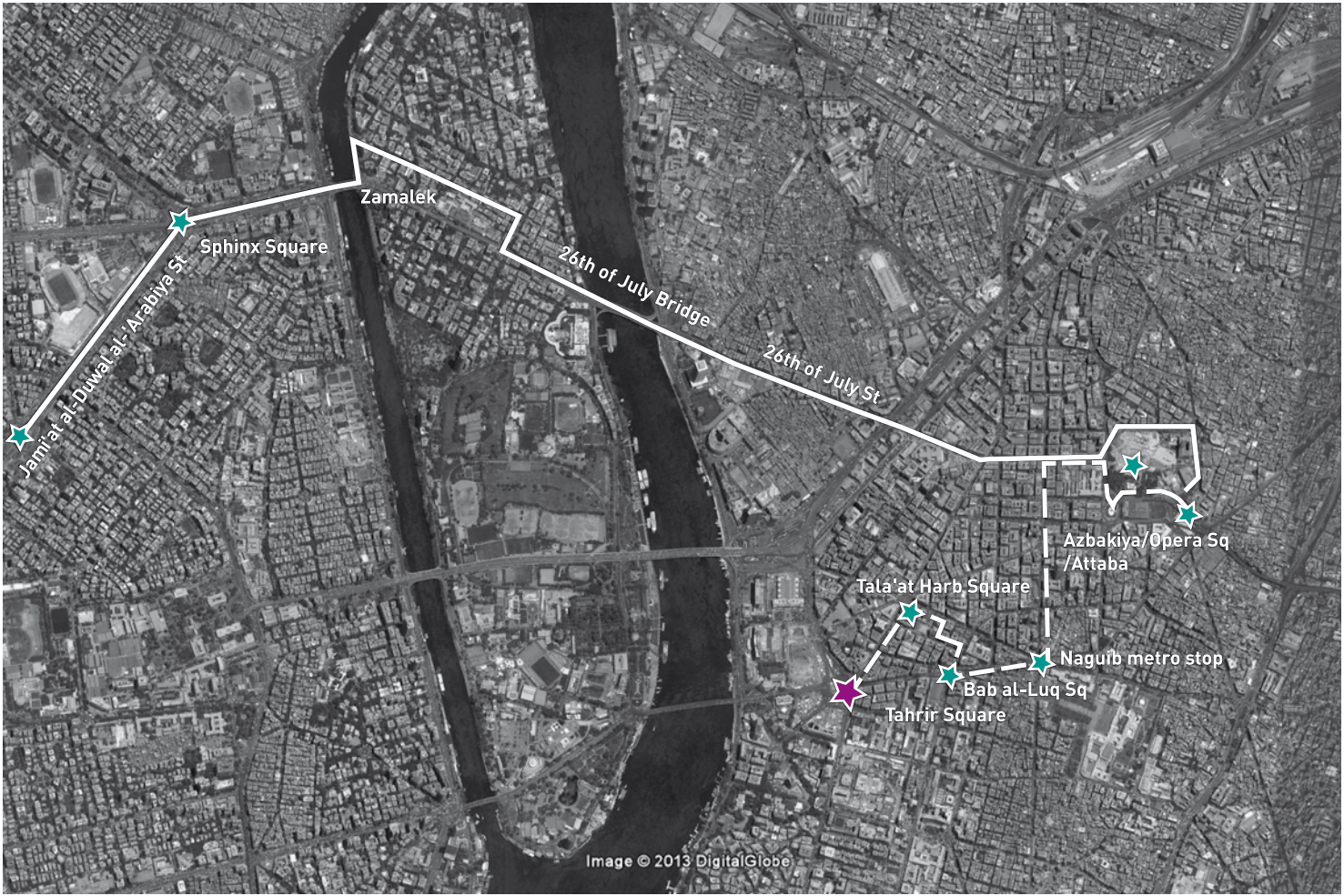
Tour 1

B-1

Urban Core

Downtown tour led by
Mohamed Elshahed

Islamic Core tour led by
May Al-Ibrashy


Jami'at al-Duwal al-'Arabiya St
Sphinx Square
Zamalek
26th of July Bridge
26th of July St
Azbakiya/Opera Sq
/Attaba
Tala'at Harb Square
Naguib metro stop
Bab al-Luq Sq
Tahrir Square
Image © 2013 DigitalGlobe

Downtown tour

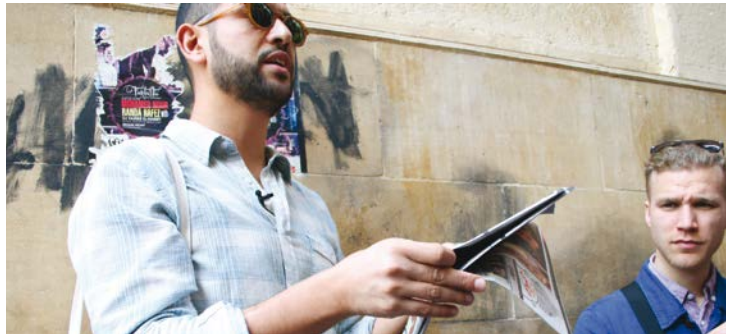
Led by Mohamed Elshahed

This tour examined locations, typologies, urban conditions, problems and opportunities that can be found in the urban core or the city center. The urban core includes areas of vastly diverse patterns and conditions, which together form the city center. It contrasts with Cairo's two other major urban categories, the informal belt and the desert city. The urban core is comprised of the historic city, its nineteenth century expansion, and subsequent development that took place between 1950 and 1970. It has changed in piecemeal fashion because of Egypt's social, economic and political conditions, all of which are constantly in flux.

The tour began on foot with an exploration of parts of Downtown Cairo (nineteenth and twentieth century) and continued to Azbakiya, the area that links pre- and post-nineteenth century expansion. From Azbakiya, we boarded a bus for a brief tour of the districts of Zamalek and Muhandisin, located on the west bank of the Nile. The tour returned east via University Bridge and culminated at the pre-nineteenth century historic core for a final exploratory walk. Themes covered in this tour included governance, public space, transport and infrastructure.



Competing narratives inscribed on the architectural facades and urban landscape of Downtown Cairo



Mohamed Elshahed leading the *Learning from Cairo* Downtown Tour.



Downtown Cairo is the site of an array of stylistic examples of modern architecture. A view from Sabri Abu 'Alam Street.



Wall blocking Falaki Street in Bab el-Luq as a means of cordoning the Ministry of Interior Affairs near Tahrir Square.


Al-Husayn Square
Al-Azhar St.
Salah Salem Highway
Al-Azhar Park
Al-Mu'izz St
Al-Darb al-Ahmar
Image © 2013 DigitalGlobe

Islamic Cairo tour

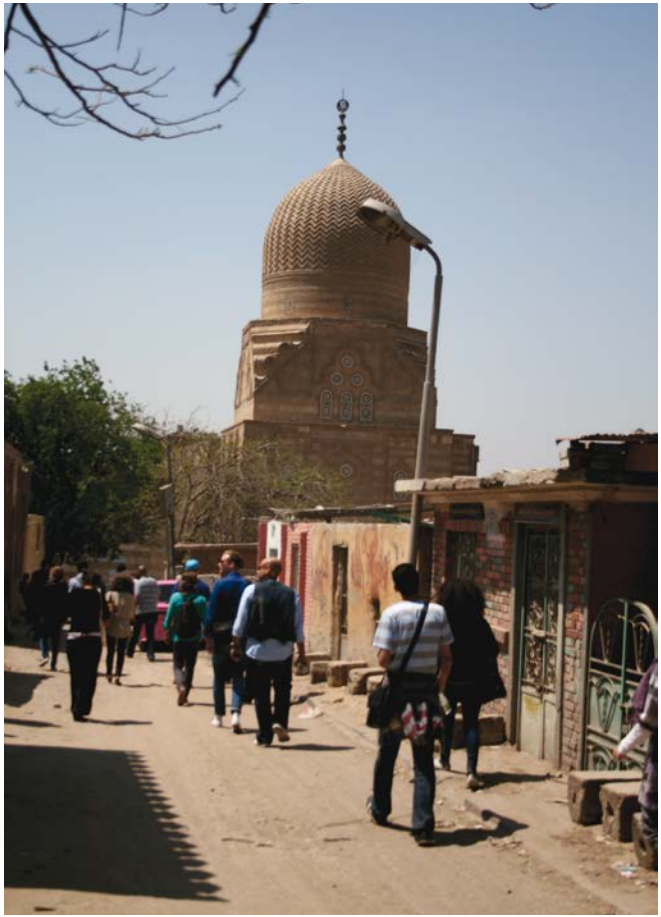
Led by May Al-Ibrashy

The capital of Egypt shifted from Alexandria in the North to its current location at the southern tip of the Delta with the Islamic conquest in 624. Over the next three centuries, the core of the capital shifted northward from al-Fustat in the South to walled al-Qahira (walled Cairo). Cairo continued to expand in all directions while retaining its Islamic core as a vibrant living settlement. This tour concentrated on the urban history of this core and its shifting relationship with the modern city. It also looked at issues of conservation and situated them in wider questions of administration, governance, conflicting rights to heritage and public space, and the politics and economics of urban development and upgrading.

We started our tour at the original outskirts of the city, walking through one of the cemeteries into al-Darb al-Ahmar, one of Islamic Cairo's main thoroughfares and recently the subject of multiple conservation efforts. We continued through the square and the street introduced in the nineteenth and early twentieth century in the original, tightly-knit fabric of the city, passing through al-Qasaba (literally "the spine," currently called al-Mu'izz Street), al-Qahira's main street. The tour followed another modern street, al-Azhar, into al-Husayn Square, where our bus transported us through Salah Salem Highway to al-Azhar Park. Here, it was possible to catch a glimpse of al-Qahira's Eastern Cemetery, al-Sahra'. Our final destination, al-Azhar Park, featured an impressive view of the eastern section of Islamic Cairo, and in particular al-Darb al-Ahmar.



View from Al-Azhar Park showing a panorama of the historic city of Cairo beyond the Ayyubid Wall, manifesting layers of deterioration and attempts at regeneration.



The Islamic Core Tour led by May Al-Ibrashy (right) stretched from the Bab Al-Wazir Cemetery through Al-Darb al-Ahmar district, to Al-Azhar Street at the heart of the Fatimid city.



May Al-Ibrashy leading the Islamic Core Tour.

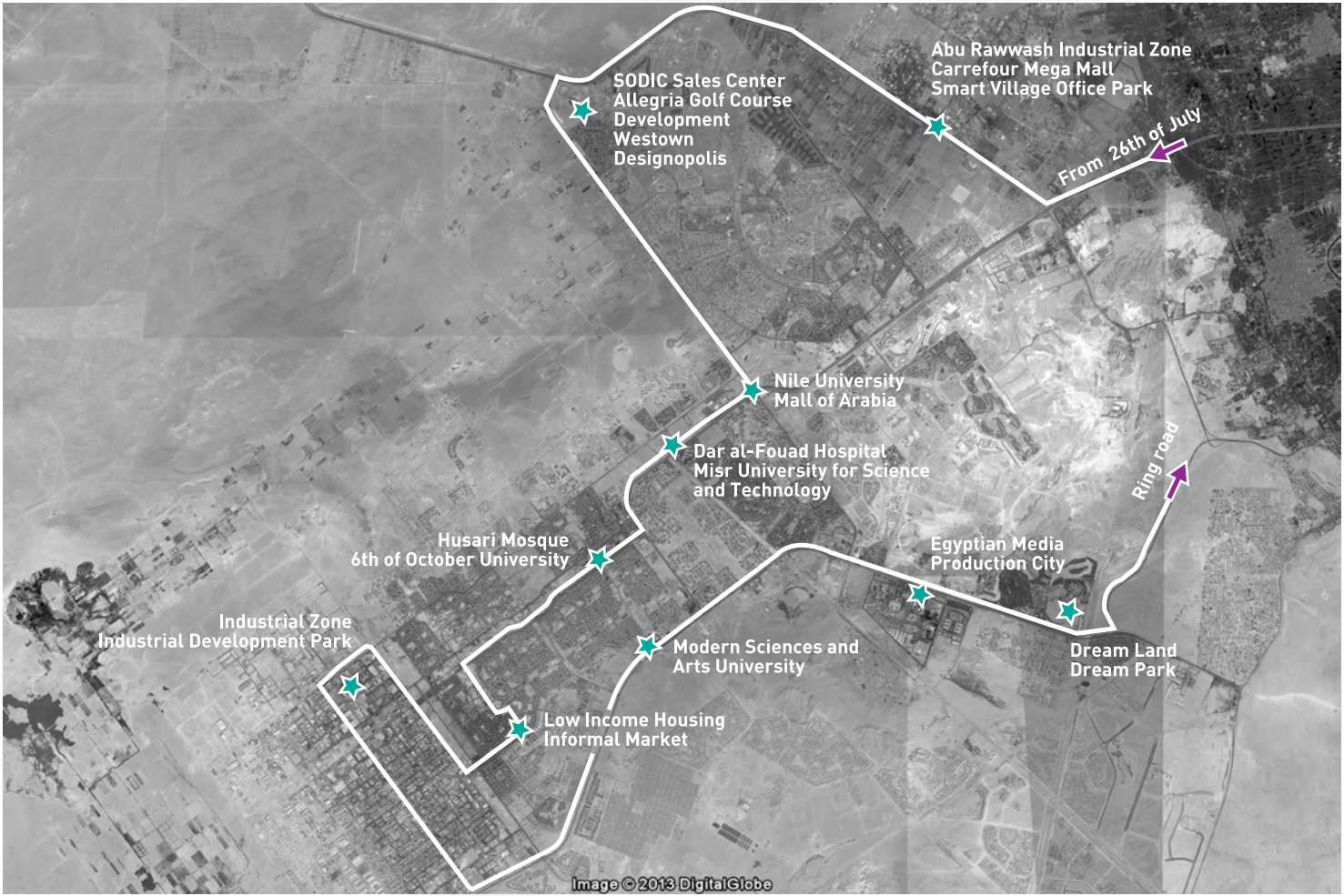
B- Urban Tours

B-1 Urban Core
B-2 Desert Cities
B-3 Informal Belt

Day Two
Tour 2

B-2
Desert Cities

Led by
Nabeel Elhady and
Richard N. Tutwiler


Abu Rawwash Industrial Zone
Carrefour Mega Mall
Smart Village Office Park
SODIC Sales Center
Allegria Golf Course
Development
Westown
Designopolis
From 26th of July
Nile University
Mall of Arabia
Dar al-Fouad Hospital
Misr University for Science
and Technology
Ring road
Husari Mosque
6th of October University
Egyptian Media
Production City
Industrial Zone
Industrial Development Park
Modern Sciences and
Arts University
Dream Land
Dream Park
Low Income Housing
Informal Market
Image © 2013 DigitalGlobe

Sixth of October and the New Cities Program Tour

Led by Nabeel Elhady and Richard N. Tutwiler

In 1969, President Gamal Abdel Nasser launched the Greater Cairo Region Master Scheme, which would later produce the New Towns Policy in 1977 under President Anwar Sadat. As originally conceived, Egypt would build four new satellite cities in the desert within a 40 km (25 mi) radius of Cairo and a further four new towns beyond. The new settlements would serve several purposes: draw population away from overcrowded Cairo; alleviate pressure on the Egyptian environment, economy, and physical infrastructure; and better distribute the population over the territory of the country. Each new town would be largely self-sufficient, with its own administrative structure, institutions, and economic activities, but linked to the capital with "development corridors." The new towns were centrally planned, and each design contained provisions for a central commercial and administrative area, subdivisions for individual housing, low-income housing estates, and upscale, gated communities.

Following law no. 59 of 1979, a New Urban Communities Authority (NUCA) within the Ministry of New Settlements implemented a series of measures to encourage rapid new town development that included cheap land prices, tax holidays, provision of utilities, and easy permitting arrangements. The bulk of public money for urban development was earmarked for the New Towns Program, and amid great fanfare and considerable public interest, the new cities began to emerge from the dry desert land.

Founded in 1981, 6th of October City to the west of Cairo is the largest new town at about 400 km^2 (154 mi^2) in area with an initial planned population of around 500,000. In comparison with other new towns outside Cairo, it is perhaps the most rapidly developed and provides the visitor with an excellent example of broader development trends among the current list of eight new towns around Cairo.

Despite being fairly close (35 km or 21 mi) to central Cairo via the 26th of July corridor, construction and, especially population growth, have been disappointingly slow when compared to the original plan. After 32 years, there are probably fewer than 250,000 permanent residents. Most of the constructed houses and apartments are either unfinished or not inhabited. Although the industrial zone developed quickly, and hundreds of businesses are now located there, most of the jobs associated with these industries are filled by workers who commute from Cairo on a daily basis. Sixth of October has its share of new universities and upmarket international schools, but again, most of the students are commuting from Cairo rather than living in the new town itself. Construction and economic growth has been uneven and discontinuous. Rather than an organic growth starting with the city center core and moving outwards in ever-expanding circuits and growth lines, the city is a patchwork of developed and undeveloped parcels of land.

Observers have noted that the pattern of uneven growth reflects the often-haphazard way land was allocated to developers, as well as the often-speculative nature of real estate development in the new towns. As David Sims has observed, "All new towns around Cairo are characterized by empty lots, stalled construction, huge empty concessions, and skeletal subdivisions." Beyond implementation issues, why have new towns failed to grow as rapidly as planned? Numerous reasons have been cited. The first is that roads and buildings are not enough to draw people from Cairo. Basic urban utilities and services have failed to keep pace with building construction, as patchy as that may be. There is a remarkable lack of affordable public transport in a city whose distances and dimensions appear to be designed for private car owners. The low-income housing estates are not attracting the people they were meant to serve because of poor location and communication.

Most low-income workers prefer to stay where they are, a commute to work away in 6th of October, rather than relocate their families. Ironically, the high-income housing is also not attracting as many new residents as it might. Luxurious standards and restrictions on use of real estate, not to mention considerable associated expenses with living in gated communities or subdivisions of individual homes, make living in upscale housing expensive. Although housing, either low- or high-income, does get bought, much of the ownership is for speculative purposes, rather than immediate residency. Although 6th of October has attracted some white-collar employers such as private universities and hospitals, employment opportunities for middle class professionals are still overwhelmingly in Cairo. Most often, even those middle-class home owners who left crowded Cairo for spacious villas in 6th of October, perhaps ironically, pass factory workers each morning commuting into 6th of October while they themselves are commuting out of the new town to their office jobs back in Cairo.



Desert Cities Tour participants gather around the model for SODIC's compound along the Cairo-Alex Road.



Low income housing in 6th of October City.

Sources:
Bush, R., and H. Ayeb 2012. *Marginality and Exclusion in Egypt*. Cairo: AUC Press.
Sims, D. 2010. *Understanding Cairo: The Logic of a City Out of Control*. Cairo: AUC Press.
Stewart, D. 1996. *Cities in the Desert: the Egyptian New Town Program*. Annals of the Association of American Geographers, 86:3 pp.459-480
Wahdan, D. 2013. *Planning Egypt's New Settlements: the Politics of Spatial Inequities*. Cairo: AUC Press.



A high-end development organized around a golf course in al-Shaykh Zayid City, 6th of October.

B- Urban Tours

B-1 Urban Core
B-2 Desert Cities
B-3 Informal Belt

Day Two
Tour 3

B-3
Informal Belt

Bulaq al-Dakrur tour led by
Khaled Abdel Halim

ʿIzbit al-Hajjana tour led by
Yahia Shawkat


Jami'at al-Duwal al-'Arabiya St
Nahiya Square
Youth Center
Izbit Harb area
Abu Qatada housing rehabilitation project
Al-Taqwa Mosque NGO
Image © 2013 DigitalGlobe
Intersection of Faysal Surface

Bulaq al-Dakrur Tour

Led by Khaled Abdel Halim

Giza has grown informally on agricultural land. Informal areas in the Governorate of Giza are classified into two main categories:

1. Unsafe areas: 25 informal areas are classified as unsafe, second priority, including shacks and deteriorated old village cores.

2. Unplanned areas: consolidating and consolidated informal areas, which form the majority of urban Giza, including Bulaq al-Dakrur, Ard al-Liwa', Imbaba, al-Warraq, al-Munib and others.

Bulaq al-Dakrur is one of the largest informal areas in Giza, with 1.2 million inhabitants and an area of nine km^2 ($3.5mi^2$). The Participatory Development Program in Urban Areas of the German Development Cooperation (GIZ) worked in Giza from 2002 to 2007 with various methods: applying a participatory upgrading approach; implementing a variety of projects and improvements that employ these participatory tools; and getting local administration to cooperate with local NGOs and communities. The projects include: improving infrastructure through a €5 million grant from KfW, a major German development bank, (for sewage, water and covering parts of a canal) and community projects to refurbish youth centers, microbus stops, markets, and other initiatives.

This tour started at the intersection of Faysal Surface (under the bridge) and al-Zumur Canal Road, and ended at Jami'at al-Duwal al-'Arabiya Street near the Nahiya Bridge.



Informal Belt Tour participants walking down a street in Bulaq al-Dakrur.



An example of informal housing development stretching on agricultural land as viewed from the Ring Road, which was initially built to contain further encroachment.


Military-owned land
High-voltage power lines
Nur al-Mashriq
Lookout point
Al-Tala'i' Youth Center
Arrival point - Dandarawi Cafe
Image © 2013 DigitalGlobe

ʿIzbit al-Hajjana Tour

Led by Yahia Shawkat

ʿIzbit al-Hajjana is a self-built community that settled in the early 1960s on desert land at the 4.5km (2.8mi) mark on the Cairo-Suez highway. At the time, this was a deserted fringe of Cairo, where military training grounds were located. Today, ʿIzbit al-Hajjana is home to anywhere from tens of thousands, to a million people – depending on who you ask – and is divided into five areas, each with its own character. The first area is the original settlement, stretching northward from the Cairo-Suez highway to the overhead power lines to the South. It is the best served, and social ties are strong given its homogenous origin. The military originally granted this land to a particular corps of troops, the *Hajjana*, a camel riding border patrol, for members and their families to live on. As the families grew larger, the settlement expanded with the army's support, and land was sold to the *Hajjana's* descendants for a symbolic 10 piasters per square meter. By the late 1960s, once construction on the Nasr City district was underway, a three-way land dispute over land ownership erupted between developer Madinet Nasr for Housing and Development, the Cairo Governorate, and the military. It is no surprise that the military prevailed; the Nasr City master plan would have to end abruptly where the *Hajjana's* military-owned land begun.

The second, third and fourth areas were built in the 1970s and 1980s and catered to families, predominantly from Upper Egypt, that migrated to Cairo in search of work. By then, the military bases had been transformed into a hub of industry, with military-owned factories that attracted jobs and labor. These three areas embody a more extreme deprivation than the original settlement, since they are located in the heart of ʿIzbit al-Hajjana, further away from the main streets that surround it. Especially precarious is the third area, where shacks are built on the cheapest available land in the area, which happens to be underneath high-voltage power lines. The fifth area is the most recent addition to ʿIzbit al-Hajjana and can easily be identified by the mid-rise, concrete apartment blocks that have capitalized on its proximity to a main road to the south of ʿIzbit al-Hajjana. This area embodies the neoliberal era's real estate boom, where most of the buildings were built by one rich speculator, who happens to be a former member of parliament.

Sources:
Al Shehab Institution for Comprehensive Development, *About Ezbet El Haggana*, (webpage) 22 March, 2006 available at http://www.alshehab.m2014.net/article29.html accessed 01/04/2013



A street in ʿIzbit al-Hajjana, a self-built community lying on the Cairo-Suez highway and bordering Nasr City.



The ʿIzbit al-Hajjana self-built community settlement at the edge of the desert.

C- Working Sessions

C-1 Mapping Informality

C-2 Evictions and Urban Citizenship

C-3 Design Innovation and Urban Development

C-4 Community Activism and Avenues of Participation

C-5 Security, Segregation and Borders

C-6 Research/Design Interventions and the Informal City

C- Working Sessions

C-1 Mapping Informality
C-2 Evictions and Urban Citizenship
C-3 Design Innovation and Urban Development
C-4 Community Activism and Avenues of Participation
C-5 Security, Segregation and Borders
C-6 Research/Design Interventions and the Informal City

Day Three
Working Session 1

C-1
Mapping Informality

Omar Nagati and Beth Stryker
CLUSTER

Gregers Tang Thomsen and Selva Gürdoğan
Superpool

Discussant:
Mohamed Elshahed
Cairobserver

Mapping Informality

The *Mapping Informality* session critically engaged the ways architects and planners are mapping cities and urban landscapes, investigating the role of mapping as a positivist tool for representation as well as a framework for dissemination, popularization of knowledge and potential empowerment.

During the first presentation, Cairo Lab for Urban Studies, Training and Environmental Research (CLUSTER), offered case studies from their ongoing research project, *Archiving the City in Flux*. This project aims at capturing the fleeting moment of urban fluidity, whereby individuals and communities are taking advantage of the political vacuum and the increasing vulnerability of the state, with its relative absence of law enforcement agencies, to maximize gains over public spaces and city infrastructure. Omar Nagati and Beth Stryker, co-founders of CLUSTER, shared their research methodology and sample documentation and analysis of the changing urban landscape in Cairo since January 2011. Their examples included street vendors in Downtown Cairo whose significance, according to Nagati and Stryker, transcends the immediate context of sidewalks to evoke larger questions concerning the battle over public space amidst competing and conflicting frames of reference. "Whose public? Who decides what types of uses take place there? And what are the norms governing these practices?" were some of the questions raised by CLUSTER.

On a larger scale, Nagati and Stryker presented the case study of a highway exit, or off-ramp from the ring road, which was constructed entirely by the local community of al-Mu'tamidiya to provide access to major city infrastructure, from which they had been hitherto excluded. CLUSTER argued that this act of defiance, which clearly demonstrates the local community's organizational capacity to mobilize resources, local knowledge and technical knowhow, is itself a statement whereby the community redefined their urban citizenship with respect to the city and public space. Methodologically, CLUSTER's tools ranged from photo documentation, time-lapse photography, GPS and other geo-referencing techniques to map the wide range of informal practices. Finally, CLUSTER presented their newly-launched project and website: Cairo Urban Initiatives Platform (CUIP: http://www.cuipcairo.org), a community-driven database, which aims at mapping civil society organizations working with art, architecture, urban advocacy, discourse and media, academia and research, and those whose interest revolves around the city, the urban environment and public space in Cairo. CUIP includes an interactive map, a directory and a shared events calendar.

Selva Gürdoğan and Gregers Tang Thomsen from Superpool presented their project, *Mapping Istanbul*, which aims in part at making visible select informal networks in Istanbul. The project was originally commissioned by Garanti Gallery to map current data on population, economic activity, education, land use, transportation, earthquakes, buildings, housing, health, social infrastructure, consumption, and energy. This was published in a book of the same title in 2009. Superpool made the point that unlike CLUSTER's research undertaken in Cairo post January 2011, *Mapping Istanbul* was not developed "during a time of stress" and that they had more time and leisure for their investigation. They also noted that while the project's defined purpose was to offer accessible visualizations of data, the book was produced in English and in a limited edition.

Some of Superpool's mapping projects include the *Dolmuş Minibus Map*. Other maps link geographical distribution of educational, health and recreational services, for example, to larger social and political questions, such as accessibility, connectivity, uneven distribution of resources.

Superpool presented three linked exhibits. *Becoming Istanbul*, *The Making of Beyoglu*, and *90*, were extensions of the *Mapping Istanbul* project, inviting participation from a broader public. Becoming Istanbul continues to make available an interactive database, including artists' videos, documentaries,

and architectural projects, related to issues often underreported in urban discourse. *Making Of Beyoglu* consisted of public workshops related to urban planning projects in the city center. *90* saw 90 days of accessible events that engaged contemporary questions related to Istanbul.

The last example Superpool presented was their *Women's Guide to Diyarbakır* project. Diyarbakır, a city in southeast Turkey, became home in the 1990s to hundreds of thousands of internally displaced people (IDPs). They faced what Superpool refers to as a "traumatic urbanization experience" due to issues of inadequate housing, lack of access to services, chronic poverty, domestic violence and state oppression. By the early 2000s these factors had led to a high suicide rate among young women. The local municipality along with local activists, facing difficulties reaching out to women, devised a decoy in laundromats. *The Women's Guide to Diyarbakır* designed by Superpool mapped the location and services of relevant NGOs. Conceived as a printed map to be distributed by the municipality, the project faced a shortage of funding. The map was later commissioned by and presented at the International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam.

Discussion:

Mohamed Elshahed, moderator of the discussion, questioned whether mapping, as an abstraction of reality into "signals and signs," risks rendering itself irrelevant to its intended audience. Revolving around this issue of target audience the ensuing discussion questioned whom and how maps serve: as a body of knowledge for researchers and academics? As implementation tools for planners and decision-makers? Or as modes of empowerment for local communities whose environment itself is being mapped?

Another related set of questions addressed the accessibility of visualization tools. Some skeptics voiced their concerns whether websites are an appropriate means of dissemination for the wider public in Cairo, questioning the possibility of participation and input by broader societal groups. Ease of reproduction and dissemination were also raised as issues, with respect to how accessible different media for map representations may be.

The issue of mapping as a potentially objectifying process raised a number of debates: to what extent may the rendering visible of informal practices contribute to further empowering communities versus making them more vulnerable to hegemonic policies and formalization attempts? In what ways can "mapping from below," such as projects undertaken in Cairo and elsewhere using OpenStreetMap open source software, enable communities to map their environment on their own terms?

Finally, the discussion delved into the pragmatic question of what would be the use of mapping informality for planners and policymakers. Can we as architects and planners distill alternative norms and standards from the body of documented informal practices, in a manner different to those taught in universities and applied by planning institutions?

In summary, the session helped shed light on two critical terms and modes of social practice: "mapping" and "informality." Both could be critical tools to interrogate the entrenched power relations and top-down planning paradigms of our cities and organizational structures of our spaces. Further, they may be used as empowering strategies or subversive tactics, amid the fast changing political and urban landscapes of our cities and societies.

Archiving the City in Flux:

Mapping Informality in Cairo since the January 2011 Revolution

Omar Nagati and Beth Stryker, CLUSTER

Archiving the City in Flux maps the changes that have taken place during and since the Revolution, which we understand to be an urban revolution: rooted in an unjust urban condition, played out in urban open spaces, and with ramifications drawn out in the streets and neighborhoods of Cairo, hence reflected in a changing geography.

Since January 2011, an increasingly vulnerable state and temporary breakdown of the security apparatus have led to new modes of informal urban intervention in public space. These activities range from the simple outdoor extension of shops onto the sidewalk in Downtown Cairo, and peddlers taking over the street at the micro scale, to roadside development alongside highways and the construction by local communities of exit ramps to access the Ring Road at the macro.

The gradual return of law enforcement agencies, which has intensified since the Summer of 2012, has created a new condition of negotiation between the state/formal institutions and local agents/informal processes. Over the past two years CLUSTER has been investigating the ways in which mapping strategies can engage the fluid political and urban condition that has emerged in this context of "post-Revolution" Cairo. Our research module *Archiving the City in Flux* takes advantage of this condition of fluidity to capture and analyze a time of turmoil and change, before it stabilizes into a new structure.

Our research is organized along three methodological trajectories, first addressing the geographic distribution of informal patterns encroaching on public space – from Cairo's deteriorating historical urban core, to its expanding informal belt, to desert development along the city's edge.[1] Temporally, our documentation of changing site conditions as they evolved prior to, during, and "post" January 2011, offers a second chronicle of the process of urban negotiation and redefinition. Third, we utilize this time-space matrix as a framework to map out the different scales and patterns of spatial informality, in order to measure qualitative differences characterizing the "new equilibrium" between state and local actors – itself a reflection of parallel processes of political reform under way in the public sphere.

Two case studies offer examples, at the micro and macro levels, of how the shifting relationship between the citizen and the state is playing out in Cairo's urban environment. As a consequence of this shift, new modes of urban citizenship are enabling communities to participate in the shaping of their built environment, a process they had been excluded from in the past.

Case Study 1: Street Vendors:

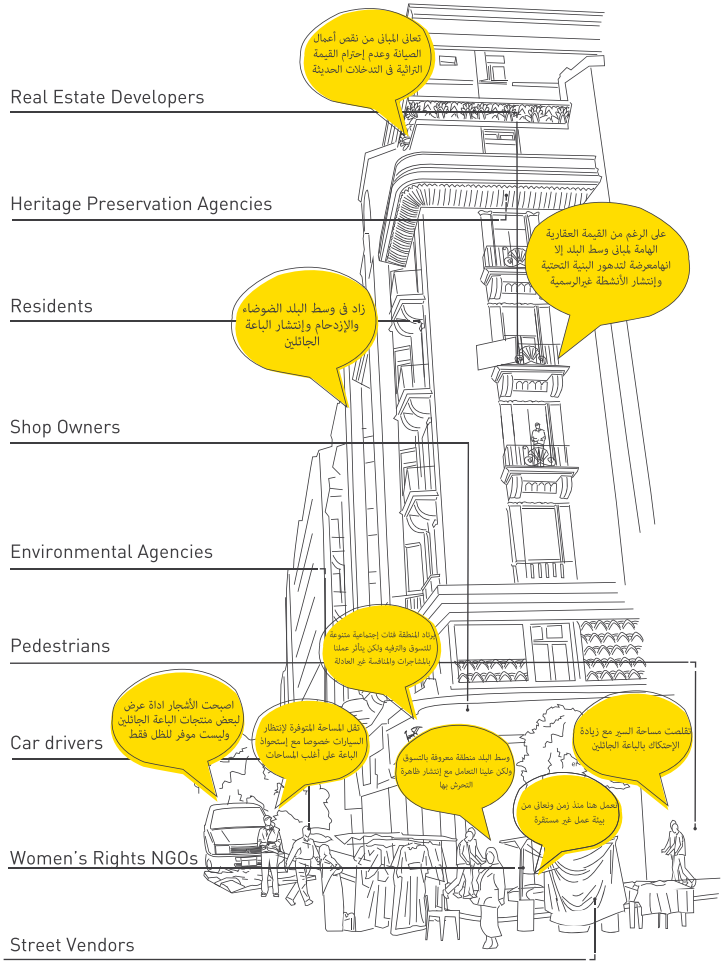
Street vendors represent a significant portion of the informal economy, which according to the International Labor Organization (ILO) makes up almost half of the Egyptian non-agricultural domestic economy.[2] Statistics vary, with studies estimating their numbers at anywhere from 1.5[3] to 5 million.[4] While street vending and other types of informal trade on the street have been part of the urban landscape of Cairo and other Egyptian cities for decades, since January 2011 the security breakdown and the state's inability or unwillingness to reinforce "urban order" have led to the proliferation of street vendor activity in almost every neighborhood. The magnitude and intensity of this phenomenon, however, have been particularly prevalent in Downtown Cairo for a number of reasons.

Downtown has long been a main shopping center for low- and middle-income families, bordered on the east and northeast by specialized markets for clothing, hardware, and appliances. It was not a large leap, therefore, for many of these activities to migrate westwards to the more lucrative market presented by the high exposure of Downtown, once circumstances became conducive for this move. In addition, Downtown Cairo has been the backyard, in a sense, for the Revolution's epicenter in Tahrir Square and surrounding streets, where the most violent clashes occurred in 2011. It was perhaps inevitable that this ground, which was "won back" from the state, should be overtaken by street vendors who, shortly after the first eighteen days of the Revolution, and in the absence of security police or local authorities, transformed Tahrir into a fairground and marketplace. Over time this marketplace, with its fluctuations in merchandise, has served as an indicator of political changes on the ground: cotton candy vendors gave way to stands selling gas masks, that were

replaced, in turn, by pillows sold in front of al-Mujamma' during the extended encampment of Tahrir following protests in Spring 2012.

In mid-August 2012, the government embarked on a project for the relocation of vendors at Qasr al-Nil Street: a response to public outcry about street vendors and as part of the new president's "100-day" plan. Vendors were assigned to numbered plots, each measuring 1.5 by 1.25 meters each, in the neighboring pedestrian al-Bursa area.[5] This was a pilot project within a larger scheme involving a rotating "one-day market" to be established in locations throughout Downtown, including the ground in front of Mujamma' in Tahrir Square, Bab al-Luq parking area, and al-Azbakiya Garden. The scheme generated such negative responses from almost all implicated parties that it was shortly aborted. Overnight, coffee shop owners and residents in al-Bursa area literally erased the white paint designating future stalls. Critics, both urban scholars and heritage preservation groups, attacked the proposed new locations for fear of them "degenerating into further decay."[6] For their part, vendors refused to be removed from their original assumed locations. They accused the media of mischaracterizing their condition and argued that the new locations would result in a loss of visibility and clientele, and, as such, their livelihoods.[7]

The issues raised by the street vendor presence in Downtown Cairo far transcend the specificity of this particular trade or income group, translating into broader questions of legality and rights to the street and city at large. They also represent one of the starkest examples of the contestation of public space in this period, redefining the meaning of public space and challenging the rules governing practices within it. The question of legality is complicated, particularly as during this time new laws are being drafted in order to account (at least in theory) for those who had previously been marginalized. As they play out competing interests and urban orders, street vendors exemplify one of the key questions facing Cairo today: Who decides what counts as public space and what is "appropriate" to its use?



Who has the right to decide what takes place in public space?



Street vendors in Downtown Cairo: sidewalks as sites of contestation and negotiation.



Tahrir Square: a marketplace? Goods for sale in Tahrir Square changed as the use and meaning of public space shifted between being a stage for protest, a campsite, and a marketplace. Images from CLUSTER field research July 2012 (above) and November 2011 (opposite).


Tikka Boss







Case Study 2: Informal Roadside Development

The Ring Road in Cairo, which was completed towards the end of the 1990s, was conceived not only to divert regional traffic away from the city center, it was also designed to contain informal housing development on agricultural land, and set a new limit to the city, beyond which construction would be illegal. What it did not intend to do was give access to communities in informal areas alongside, despite the immediate proximity between the elevated highways and neighboring buildings – some so close one could almost reach out and touch the roadway without gaining access to it. This segregation reflects a broader and more abstract political and economic condition of exclusion of the largely marginalized urban underclass, who lack services and connectivity to the city and society.

Over time, communities constructed small stairways and opened up access points onto the road, leading to improvised microbus stations, roadside tea stands and coffee-shops. As a result, the Ring Road has become increasingly moored in surrounding neighborhoods. Car repair shops began to advertise along the Ring Road using tires or mufflers, before stealthily adding a ladder or two to connect their shops to the roadside. While these interventions have been taking place in a subtle manner and on a small scale over the past decade, it was only after January 2011 that their presence became widespread. Not only did the size of certain interventions increase, but new forms and typologies of intervention began to emerge as well. The most dramatic example of the latter was an exit ramp, in fact four of them, that were realized in and by the Mu'tamidiya village/informal housing neighborhood to gain access to the Ring Road.

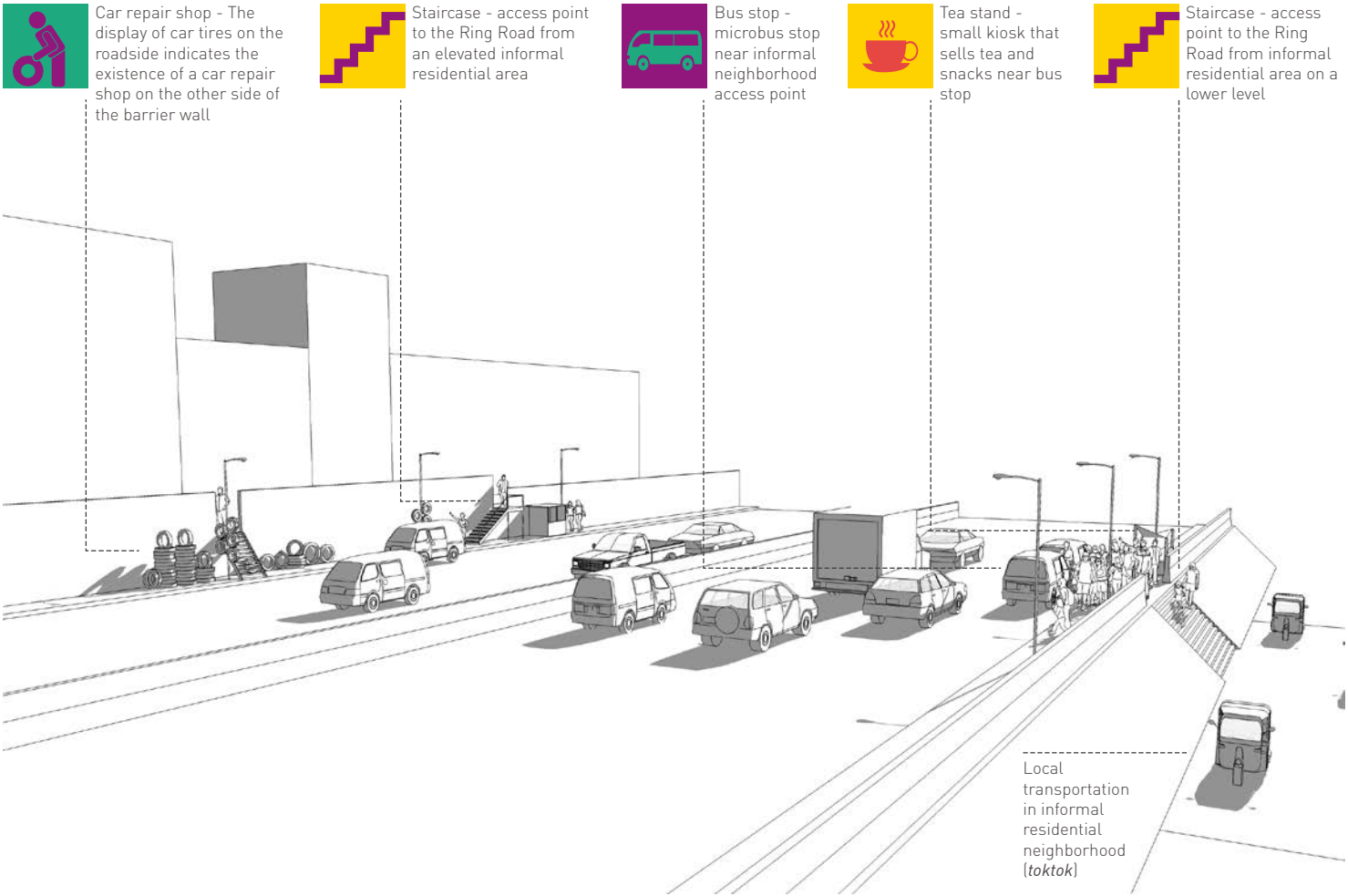
Al-Mu'tamidiya exit, a community-constructed on and off ramp, was built during the three months immediately following Mubarak's ousting. It is located in the stretch between two formal junctures: 26th of July Corridor, less than 1 km to the north, and Saft al-Laban Corridor, 2 km to the south. When the Ring Road was constructed at the turn of the twenty-first century, al-Mu'tamidiya, like many other informal communities, was cut off from the highway.

For al-Mu'tamidiya community, the Ring Road literally passed over the area for a decade, while offering the potential for vehicular access. In interviews we conducted, community leaders acknowledged that they had long considered the proposition of constructing on and off ramps to the highway, yet it was only during the period of security apparatus collapse that the opportunity for executing this plan presented itself.[8] The project cost around a million Egyptian Pounds – a quarter of the cost if constructed by the government, according to one of the community leaders.[9] It required the mobilization of all the resources the community could muster. Some contributed cash, others contributed in kind: donating material, machinery, labor and know-how. Once the piles of garbage and debris were removed, four ramps were constructed copying the existing exits nearby, and adopting similar techniques and codes within some margin of interpretation. The community meticulously documented the process of construction and presented it in a dramatic video, which was subsequently sent to the governor and police chief in Giza, inviting them to inaugurate the project. As a result of the community's solicitation, and at the peak of state's vulnerability, the Giza Governorate officially integrated the new on-and-off ramps into the city infrastructure, celebrating the initiative of the revolutionary citizens and designating the area under the highway as a traffic police station. In the end they lent legitimacy to what otherwise, in a different time and place, would have been deemed a criminal act.



Al-Mu'timidiya exit




Car repair shop - The display of car tires on the roadside indicates the existence of a car repair shop on the other side of the barrier wall
Staircase - access point to the Ring Road from an elevated informal residential area
Bus stop - microbus stop near informal neighborhood access point
Tea stand - small kiosk that sells tea and snacks near bus stop
Staircase - access point to the Ring Road from informal residential area on a lower level
Local transportation in informal residential neighborhood (*toktok*)



In this example, and others we have documented, individuals and communities are not merely resolving urban issues that have been pressing for decades, such as access points and insufficient services. They are reconstituting the meaning of the city and their relationship to the larger whole. By marking their presence through infrastructure interventions, they are transcending questions of basic needs, and raising fundamental questions about what it means to be a citizen after the Revolution, having equal rights and access to services. The significance of al-Mu'tamidiya, we argue, is far more symbolic than the utilitarian role and cooperative economic model it offers - it stands as a testimony of an emerging urban order.

Together these case studies offer a reading of the city where individuals and communities are inscribing their imprint on the urban landscape. By attempting to gain access to its infrastructure, they are making claims to their right to the city and its public spaces, from which they have been excluded for decades. *Archiving the City in Flux* outlines a hypothesis of urban governance under conditions where the state is relatively absent or increasingly incapacitated. It looks to future trajectories for urban development, offering lessons learned from informality and possible scenarios to help renegotiate the formal-informal relationship.

1: For analysis of Cairo's divergent urban trajectories, see Sims, D., 2010. *Understanding Cairo: The Logic of a City Out of Control*, Cairo, Egypt; New York: The American University in Cairo Press.
2: ILO, 2011. *Youth Unemployment in the Arab World is a Major Cause for Rebellion* [online] ILO. Available at: http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/features/WCMS_154078/lang--en/index.htm [Accessed Jul 27, 2011].
3: Assad, R., 2009. Labor Supply, Employment, and Unemployment in the Egyptian Economy, 1988-2006 in Assad, R., ed *The Egyptian Labor Market Revisited*. Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press.
4: Ramadan, A., (unpublished) *Policies for the Informal Sector in Egypt: a Case Study of Clothes Selling Street Vendors in Downtown Cairo*. Paper given at graduate seminar at the American University in Cairo in 2011.
5: For example, see media coverage of street vendors and the "100-day plan" in al-Shorouk News, Sep 2nd, 2012. http://shorouknews.com/news/viewaspx?cdate=02092012&id=e3a8764b-f33c-4c6c-b2f6-6aef05d5cbad. For the new amendment of Street Vendors Law (Law 105, 2012 to amend penalties in Law 33, 1957), refer to article in al-Shorouk News, Jan 6th, 2013, http://www.shorouknews.com/news/view.aspx?cdate=06012013&id=71911024-56f9-4493-8ce0-a68ae16bffd3
6: See for example Galila al-Kadi's article criticizing the idea of using al-Azbakiya Garden as alternative site for street vendors. http://gate.ahram.org.eg/News/248001.aspx
7: Based on interview with representatives of vendors on Qasr al-Nil Street, Nagati and team, Aug 29th, 2012.
8: Musa, Abdel Nasser. Personal interview. (December 2011) The term he used in Arabic was *infiraja*, literally meaning "opening."
9: Ibid.

Omar Nagati:
"The first question we are asking is, why do we map? [...] The question of informality has to do with social injustice, divided geography and accessibility. [...] Mapping has always been a monopoly of the state. In many ways, the mapping of informality has been very exclusive, almost editing out anything outside the formal city ... but it also has to do with the perception of the middle class with respect to informality, which has been very distorted and I would say limited to a very distant experience - basically driving on the Ring Road and seeing it from a distance. We need to change the perspective of the main narrative basically.

Now, the revolution started, and we've seen that people are remapping their geography. They're reconstituting the meaning of the streets and spaces ... the city is now re-imagined, reconstituted and remapped, from a revolutionary perspective."

Beth Stryker:
"We needed to help create some tools for people to visualize what was happening in the city and tools for them to actually be able to communicate, share resources and also broadcast their activities. So we proposed building a shared directory and calendar to document all of these new initiatives in the city, which we are now calling the Cairo Urban Initiatives Platform (CUIP).*

[...]

When we started developing , the constituency was the initiatives themselves, and so our first objective was to create this tool for self-representation and for communication among the initiatives in Cairo."

* www.cuipcairo.org
CUIP is a bilingual Arabic/English online directory, shared calendar of events, and interactive map for the multiple art, culture, architecture, advocacy, urban development and interdisciplinary organizations/initiatives addressing issues related to the city, the urban environment and public space in Cairo.

Selva Gürdoğan
"The *Mapping Istanbul* project didn't have any other purpose than to make things visible. It didn't come at a moment of stress like in Cairo right now, we had the time, we had the leisure to do it. But there was a definite lack of visualizations, there was a definite lack of owning the city, [a question of] what is a citizen of Istanbul. Again, similar issues of who has the right of decision making in the city and so on and so forth, just to allow the tools of visualization to be accessible to everyone."

Hanaa Gad:
"If we document all of this informality, what will be the objective? If the objective is to have information that would lead to development, then who has the capacity to carry out that development? It's the government that is supposed to carry out this documentation in order to prepare a plan for development.

[...]

However, in order to be able to benefit from the documentation of information, such as knowing where the microbus station is, where the closest pathway is, I have to guarantee that users have access to the Internet. We were just saying that residents of informal areas in Cairo constitute more than 60 percent ... Are they able to use computers and the Internet? We could be building another gated community this way once more by using information technology."

Vittoria Capresi:
"I have another issue to just put on the table. Because we really appreciate the effort of Omar [Nagati] and Beth [Stryker] and May Al-Ibrashy and of course Mohamed [Elshahed]. I'm just thinking about the reproducibility of these things, because you are not sleeping since the Revolution maybe, to do this mapping, and to do this work. And there is this big gap about what is happening in the city, and what we are teaching at university. I see for the applications that we are receiving for our summer schools, they are 98 percent applications with some compounds in the desert, so the projects they are doing, it's kind of something coming from somewhere else, so not connected to the city at all. So, a topic that I would like to discuss with you is, what we can do, we as teachers and professionals, can we get a little bit of this informality into our formal walls of university, or a better way around, how to get the students to get to know and to work for or against or to map or whatever. I think we should think about a way to link together these two institutions."

Omar Nagati
"I agree that the first stage would be the demystification of informality, because it's still like a very big black box. I think what we're trying to do with this conference –and many other people are trying to do this –is to try and open up this area to make it accessible to a larger audience: practitioners and academics and politicians, but I think want to also be very realistic about this question of changing the pedagogy. It takes much more than just a couple of faculty [members] breaking new grounds. I think this is institutions' vested interest in this status quo. It's like saying, 'the Revolution happened so bureaucracy is going to be different.' No, the bureaucracy has been there for many years, the status quo is very strong, and it's going to take a lot of structural change to allow for this alternative mode of learning."


CAIRO
URBAN INITIATIVES
PLATFORM

C- Working Sessions

C-1 Mapping Informality
C-2 Evictions and Urban Citizenship
C-3 Design Innovation and Urban Development
C-4 Community Activism and Avenues of Participation
C-5 Security, Segregation and Borders
C-6 Research/Design Interventions and the Informal City

Day Three Working Session 2

C-2

Evictions and Urban Citizenship

Gautam Bhan
Indian Institute for Human Settlements, Delhi

Yahia Shawkat
Shadow Ministry of Housing, Cairo

Discussant:
Joseph Schechla
Housing and Land Rights Network, Cairo

Evictions and Urban Citizenship

This working session addressed issues of eviction and housing rights within the broader concept of urban citizenship. It aimed at interrogating the question of "rights" in both local and international contexts, by shedding light on comparative examples from Cairo and Delhi. To this end, Joseph Schechla, as moderator, started out by introducing key international guidelines and principles as a framework for the two presentations and discussion that followed. He began by defining the concept of citizenship and entitlements, the enjoyment of rights and the state's responsibilities, before outlining basic parameters of the right to adequate housing and its definition according to international law. Schechla also articulated the differences between secured tenure and rights against forced eviction. The latter, he argued, contravenes international law, and requires the state to take immediate action to protect legal security of tenure, and ensure adequate housing for its citizens.

Guatam Bhan began his presentation by taking issue with the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, problematizing the notion of citizenship rights on global, national and urban levels. Citing James Holston's definition of "insurgent citizenship," Bhan referred to his research in India, observing that the elite often define themselves as Delhi citizens while the poor regard themselves as citizens of India. He emphasized the distinction between marginalized communities at the city's peripheries, such as those in Bulaq and 'Izbit al-Hajjanah in Cairo, who make claims to urban citizenship as a "turn away [rather than] turning to the state." He compared this to the example of China, where one is born either a rural or urban citizen, which defines the benefits one is entitled to by the state, such as health and education.

Bhan elaborated on the development of informal settlements through the classic patronage of the state or clientelism, as communities time their encroachment on land with elections and voting banks. They invade, occupy, build, introduce services, and wait for elections. "Our cities are not planned," he declared. In contrast to what is taught in planning schools, where plans precede construction, "the way we settle is, first you occupy, then incrementally you build a little bit of money, another wall, you get one service at a time, so services come incrementally, at the very end do you think about reentering the plan."

Referring back to his research in India, Bhan made the distinction between two phases marking eviction campaigns under dictatorship and democracy. The first big cycle of evictions took place between 1973 and 1981, when martial and emergency laws were declared; and then again between 2002 and 2010, after the state allowed the poor to build illegally. But while the first cycle of evictions happened during the time when constitutional safeguards were suspended, the second took place under a functioning democracy, he claimed.

Bhan posed the question of how in a functional democracy you manage to get evictions of this scale and not suffer the consequences, and proposed to address this paradox by framing informality in three ways: the first being an "informality in use," which means using land in ways unintended or for which it is not planned/zoned. The second is "informality in transaction," referring to whether or not one has a written form, paying by check every month to buy a house in al-Hajjana, for example. The third is "informality as illegality," defining the title to one's house and whether the state recognizes it as a legal property right, and thus the ability get a bank loan on it, or a mortgage.

In conclusion, Bhan suggested framing informality not as a question of illegality but of legitimacy, arguing that "our concern should be about legitimate housing as opposed to legal or illegal, formal or informal." He concluded his presentation by proposing three questions or provocations: The first concerns the threat of eviction: "Do you have the right to remain? Are you literally unable to stay in the place where you are?" The second questions the correlation between informality and the provision of services and infrastructure. In India, he explained, service providers since 2006 have been told "It is not your job to see if something is legal or illegal, you're a water company, put water connections." The last question he posed was "How do you exist as a citizen?" He argued that very often, spatial illegality is connected to the inability to exist on paper. People without a formal address, or who don't receive bills, or don't have a meter, are asked the ironic question of "Can you prove who you are? And can you prove

where you live?" Bhan then elaborated on types of informal settlements in the Indian context, arguing that many of these settlements survived outside the law. He concluded by raising questions as to how they survived and became legitimate, calling for alternative ways to think about actual negotiations rather than legal categories.

The second presenter, Yahia Shawkat, began with a provocative slide of an "Eviction Decree" document, or *qarar istila'*, a term associated in Arabic with theft. He contemplated why the Egyptian government would use criminal terminology in their official certificates for land takeover.

Shawkat then embarked on a criticism of the centralized planning that has been a ruling paradigm in Cairo for decades. He demonstrated that decisions to allocate land for housing are complicated by the multiple ministries at play, at the top of which are the Ministries of Defense, Antiquities, and Petroleum. The consent of these three ministries are a precondition for any land to be allocated for development outside the Nile Valley, which itself represents only six percent of the total area in Egypt. The Ministry of Housing, he argued, sits at the bottom of this hierarchy. Shawkat pointed out that top-down "high modernist" planning is manifest in thinking in two dimensions, getting out a marker and saying "this is where certain things are going to happen." It fails to consider carefully what is going to be developed in that place, and to engage the participation of communities which live in a chosen location, or might be relocated under a given plan. Further, Shawkat criticized the New Cities program and its land allocation strategy, whereby market-driven speculations have led to unfair competition and legalized exclusion. He presented a detailed analysis of land prices, densities and land allocation mechanisms, which exacerbate the inequality of land distribution in housing development projects.

Shawkat then presented an overview of the *Cairo 2050* master plan, arguing it is a "marriage between top-down planning and this very sort of neoliberal look at Cairo [...] investing every last inch out of it," whereby "all the poor people and the vulnerable" are being pushed out of Cairo in order to turn it into a "'world class' city." This plan is only possible, he argued, because of law number 10 for 1990, called *qanun naz' al-milkiyah lil-manfa'ah al-'amah*, or the revoking of property for public benefit. Shawkat listed the eight different uses the law provides for expropriation due to imminent domain, including clear use, such as water, infrastructure, and transportation projects. But the law also includes very vague designations, such as the term "for planning and upgrading" and those "considered for public benefit," which Shawkat cautioned could lead to potential abuse and the eviction of marginal communities.

In the last segment of his presentation, Shawkat cited a number of projects related to *Cairo 2050* that would result in the expropriation of property and potential evictions. He referred to the 2005 clearing of an area along the Nile Corniche, Hikr Abu Duma, after it was designated an "unsafe area" to make room for high-end towers. Shawkat estimated that 350-400 families were evicted then.

Shawkat pointed out the legal loopholes that impacted the extended district of Ramlat Bulaq with respect to variable compensation to a community made up of renters, squatters, and people with very clear tenure. "Are they all going to be compensated equally? Is the government going to compensate the landlord and the tenants, both or not?" he exclaimed. In the Maspero Triangle, Shawkat pointed out the buildings that will survive future demolition, such as the TV building, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Nile Hilton. The rest of the area is facing targeted eviction, he suggested, where the governorate has been using various tactics to depopulate the area over the years. Some have not been allowed to get water or electricity for the last few years. There was also a governorate decree for buildings not to be rebuilt if they fall, and banning the restoration of buildings in poor condition, which would lead to their dereliction and eventual collapse.

The last example Shawkat presented was 'Izbit Khayrallah, where a six-lane highway cuts through this dense informal housing area. He pointed out additional cases where the construction of traffic corridors, such as Saft al-Laban and the prospective Rod al-Farag dissect existing communities, raising questions of public benefit, and the role of the private sector within the "public-private partnership" development framework.

As moderator, Schechla offered an overview of international law to frame the three essential concepts developed by the panelists in their case-based presentations: tenure security, citizenship and eviction. He pointed out that international treaty law guarantees the human right to adequate housing. In summary Schechla noted that individuals and communities subject to forced evictions without state procedural safeguards outlined by international law, "are entitled to reparations, legally defined to include restitution (return, resettlement and rehabilitation), compensation for losses and values that cannot be restored, guarantees of non-repetition, and satisfaction at justice served."

The Right to Cairo

Yahia Shawkat

It is a misconception that security of tenure is relatively high in Cairo. On a weekly basis, families living in the capital lose their homes for a number of reasons, sometimes at a moment's notice. Rents in Cairo have been rising far more quickly than rates of income. Even cheaper parts of the city deemed 'undesirable,' mostly informal areas, have been subject to such instability. Take, for example, al-Basatin, where about 100 families were forced out by increasing rents, and have started building a new settlement nearby on a vacant plot of land.[1]

In these areas, building collapses are not uncommon. In the course of my research, I have counted 43 such collapses in the Greater Cairo region over the span of nine months. That's a rate of one a week, affecting an average of four families per incident. In the event of a building being condemned – and there are thousands of such decrees – families are either removed forcibly and the building demolished, or they are made to waive any right to compensation if they choose to remain in the precarious building.[2]

A number of government agencies, sometimes in partnership with real estate investors, have been actively seeking to relocate or simply evict families from homes that have unclear tenure, in the pursuit of greater profits. Ramlat Bulaq, Bulaq, Maspero and Awlad Allam, home to 2,000 families, have all been identified by the Informal Settlement Development Fund (ISDF) as being hazardous.[3] and state officials have either pressured residents to accept buyouts by investors,[4] or have asked them to pay steep fees to legalize their tenure.[5] This approach can hardly be seen as an upgrading scheme.

What high rents, building collapses and state-sponsored gentrification in Cairo have in common is profit. Supply of affordable housing is dismal, due to regulation and limited construction. Meanwhile, property developers have marketed houses in Egypt to foreign buyers as being cheap and tax free – no property, capital gains or inheritance taxes – with an expected 25 percent return on investment.[6] Thus housing prices have sky-rocketed; land prices in the surrounding desert cities, meant to be an affordable alternative to the city core, have gone up 1600 percent in the last 10 years,[7] while between 2003 and 2008 house prices in informal areas ballooned by 116 percent.[8]

In order to ensure that the majority of Cairenes have a decent place to live securely, as is their right, laws governing land and housing tenure must be changed, economic and built-environment policy must be rewritten, and protective measures must be enacted.

Thus a massively unregulated real estate market is something both private developers of all scales as well as state agencies have noticed and exploited. As a result, Cairo is witnessing inflating rents, families are forced to live in condemned buildings, and state agencies seem overly keen to raise some cash. In order to ensure that the majority of Cairenes have a decent place to live securely, as is their right, laws governing land and housing tenure must be changed, economic and built-environment policy must be rewritten, and protective measures must be enacted.

It is here that a great opportunity exists for architects and planners to work with activists, or even become activists themselves. Their skills can be used to argue for more just policies by highlighting inequities in land allocations, or mapping economic information in specific areas to help indicate the scale of inequality in the housing market. On the ground, information generated by architects can help communities fight for their right to live in the capital. Maps that clearly show the history of an area can help tenants prove ownership. An understanding of planning laws and regulations would help communities make cases against projects that may negatively affect them, or challenge government plans for their areas.



Graffiti in Ramlat Bulaq

In addition, many technical interventions need to be conceived. For example, what do you do with a lived-in, eight-story building that is tilting towards the street? How do you retrofit wastewater infrastructure in streets just a few meters wide without affecting the houses lining them?

Universities should also play a strong role in supporting their local communities, especially public universities, which in my view owe the Egyptian taxpayer something in return. Universities may be of aid in the policy change battles, or in their role as educators, making students more aware of the context in which they will be practicing and the social responsibility that comes with being a built environment practitioner. Perhaps within a decade universities will be able to graduate more professionals who better understand Egypt's built environment, and architects who feel more relevant to their communities.

1: Interviews with residents of Mazarita, a newly formed self-built community near 'Izbit al-Nasr, Cairo. January 2013
2: Interviews with residents of a condemned building in Mit 'Uqba, Giza. September, 2012
3: Informal Settlement Development Fund report, 2011
4: Cairo Governorate has been actively aiding investors in their pursuit to buyout residents in Ramlet Boulaq and in the so-called Maspero Triangle. The Cairo Governorate website shows a schematic drawing of a vastly developed Maspero in its section titled "Investors" http://www.cairo.gov.eg/invest/projects/display.aspx?ID=1 , while interviews with the residents of Ramlat Bulaq have revealed at least one meeting with the governorate and investors in May 2013.
5: Research and support work by the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights.
6: An international property investment website highlights the lack of Capital Gains tax, Inheritance tax, Stamp Duty or Wealth tax and that the Real Estate tax – which has yet to be implemented – varies according to location and property registration fee, which can be no higher than 2000 EGP (approximately £ 175 GBP). It adds that there is an applicable sales tax when a property is sold at 2.5 percent of the sales price. It also predicts a conservative capital gain of 25 percent in the Egyptian housing market. Property investment advisor, International Property World http://www.internationalpropertyworld.com/investment-property-egypt/why_invest_in_egypt.htm Ret: 10.06.2012
7: Recent land auctions in al-Shaykh Zayid and New Cairo saw land prices average EGP 4000 per square meter, (*Ilgha' mazad arady al iskan al 'aely fi al Qahir al Gadeeda, Al Mal*, 19.02.2013 http://www.almalnews.com/Pages/StoryDetails.aspx?ID=37499#.UZQALcoTbE0) a 16 fold increase on auctions in 2003 (World Bank. 2006. Policy note. Vol. 1 of Egypt - Public land management strategy. Washington D.C. – The Worldbank. http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2006/06/8880284/egypt-public-land-management-strategy-vol-1-2-policy-note)
8: USAID 2008. *Housing Study for Urban Egypt*. http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADY276.pdf

Gautam Bhan

"Our cities are not planned. So you sit there in planning school and you get taught this: you plan, and you do services, then you build a building, and then you occupy. That's what elite people do ...

The way we settle is, first you occupy, then incrementally you build a little bit of money, another wall, you get one service at a time, so services come incrementally, at the very end do you think about reentering the plan. It's the exact opposite cycle of settlement. And the question for us, in terms of thinking about housing in our cities, is partly to recognize that our cycle of habitation and production is entirely the reverse of what textbook planning is meant to be ...

But the rich do it as much as the poor. The idea of occupation and *post-facto* legalization is the way both the elite and the poor settle the city. So the question we're looking at is not "there is illegality." It's that different illegalities have different consequences."

Nabeel Elhady:
"The first problem I see is in our dealing with 'the informal areas' or whatever they are called. The problem is that we do not have accurate information which we can depend on ... I mean that we have a serious problem in the lack of the state's transparency ... and the question is what shall we do?"

Gautam Bhan:
"I have been on both sides of this about how much information you need before you act. And I don't think this is a very subtle question, because I think a lot of the times there is this question of the lack of data, [which] also becomes a red herring that prevents a lot of action, right? Because you want certainty. You're not going to get certainty in any of our cities. So I think we have to be very careful about fetishizing too much the fact that we can't get the information. At the same time, we do need information, because you need bases of action. So one of the things that I think about is, could that information be generated? If we need to know about communities, let's ask them. If you look at a lot of the work, you look at self-enumeration, self-service ... but you have to do it from a position of faith. Another problem is, if you're going to count yourself and hand yourself over on a platter to be evicted, which happened in many communities with the governments here...Now this is the problem with data. It's that data can be used as effectively for targeting as it can be [used for] improvement. [...]

One of my practices is to enable the generation of community-led data. It's so critical, about saying 'this is where we are,' and this is where legitimacy I think is more important to me, because if legitimacy drives your data collection you get a totally kind of different information, as opposed to if you're looking to map who is on the ground. So the data question has to be linked with what this kind of nuance about the differences between informality and legality."

Kareem Ibrahim:
"What I am really missing in these two presentations is the aspect of the local. By the local I mean people and I mean the government also ... I don't buy this idea of a big conspiracy ... I think we need to develop a better understanding of the government, and the way it thinks ... how the state sees development ... because unless we do that, we don't have a counter-narrative. The government is formed of different layers of bureaucrats, and these layers are completely separated. There is a complete level that is working, in the lower level in the neighborhoods, because they live in these neighborhoods actually. They cannot go to meet their neighbors and tell them 'we're going to just remove this neighborhood,' because they're living here."

Yahia Shawkat:
"I'm going to start with Dr. Nabeel and Kareem [Ibrahim]'s questions because I think that they're more of the same even though they look a bit at opposite ends. On one side, there's no information, and on the other side there's this whole other perspective. We want to know this perspective. If the government wants people in general, the people it's meant to serve, to believe that it's acting in their interest and not against it, then there should be information. Information should be publicly available. The link that has the Maspero development plan on the Cairo Governorate website, you can't get to it directly ... So there is this masking of information, there is this flirting with having information or not, and so on, and when it comes to not having transparency, I think, like Gautam [Bhan] said, we have to produce this information."

Gautam Bhan:
"I just have to add one sentence here, that the one power we do have, is we have students. We have universities, and this is the one thing that I do ... Every dissertation project picks a site and makes that data available ...

Specific data gives insight. If you do ten ethnographic studies and count in ten settlements across Cairo, you can begin to act. We can't do a census, but it doesn't mean we can't generate data, and they add up, actually remarkably."



C- Working Sessions

C-1 Mapping Informality
C-2 Evictions and Urban Citizenship
C-3 Design Innovation and Urban Development
C-4 Community Activism and Avenues of Participation
C-5 Security, Segregation and Borders
C-6 Research/Design Interventions and the Informal City

Day Three Working Session 3

C-3

Design Innovation and Urban Development

Mokena Makeka
Makeka Design Lab, Cape Town

Mohamad Abotera and Ahmed Zaazaa,
Madd Platform

Discussant:
Amr Abdel Kawi
Department of Construction and Architectural Engineering, School of Sciences and Engineering, AUC

Design Innovation and Urban Development

Design, and the architects that manage it, help orchestrate important initiatives in the urban environment. Working within the framework of public policy, community participation, client representation and issues of sustainability; and with the responsibility to navigate these often complex and tenuous relationships; design has a power and a responsibility to balance interests of various groups creatively, effectively, efficiently and economically. This working session presents two such examples, equally successful in such navigation, but vastly different in form.

This working session brought together, in discussant Amr Abdel Kawi's words, "vastly different projects, which represent opposing approaches, but share the common goal of reaching a collective vision to effect change in the city." The objective of the session was to present ways in which design innovation can inform and address the issue of urban development.

Mokena Makeka began the session with a presentation titled *Identity, Politics and Aesthetics in Architectural Practices*. Makeka originally intended to present a discussion of public spaces, but was inspired by the presentation of the *Cairo 2050* vision in day one of the conference, and instead discussed his own work on the *Cape Town 2030* vision. He framed the discussion of a project for a city transport and activity hub, the Cape Town Station, in the context of this vision. The first factor he discussed was the effect of climate change and resource management on the city's future. The client in the Cape Town Station project was Intersite, the property arm of the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa, the largest landowner in the city. Makeka made the case that the re-thinking of the future of the city was driven not the city itself, but by its largest landowner: the railway authority.

The main issue addressed by the project was mobility, with attention to how mobility supports and integrates communities. In addition to mobility and efficiency, factors in the design of this project included questions of justice and governance. Ultimately the station project brief was developed not only by the client, but with public participation as well. The conclusion was that the station must act as a mobility and activity hub for the city, in addition to acting as an inspirational vision for a world city.

One of the important goals of the station soon became one of equity – providing an additional transportation grid, overlaid with a public space grid, giving access to those previously excluded. This helped bridge the historical apartheid divide between classes and socio-economic groups within the city. This was a clear departure from previous practices where railway lines were used to delineate and emphasize these divides, rather than erase and integrate their inhabitants. The location of the station itself became an instrument to address various developmental needs, and to help achieve this integration and equity.

Historical context also plays a role in the development of the *Cape Town 2030* scheme presented by Makeka. In comparison to *Cairo 2050*, the Cape Town scheme is carved around historical footprints, integrating open public space with historical sites, as opposed to cutting across historical layers as if they do not exist in the collective and physical memory of the city. Another important role this project played was in the navigation of socio-political forces in balance with the betterment of the city, particularly between the different parties – politicians, railway authorities and the local government of the city of Cape Town.

Madd Platform presented their similarly positioned work in al-Kum al-Ahmar and Mit 'Uqba, implemented in a different mode, with incremental models utilized as an approach to urban development. The premise for their work began with the inherent disparity seen in much of Cairo between what the designer conceives to be a functional system, and communities' needs-adapted patterns of use. This is commonly referred to as "informality," and is seen by designers as conditions to be tamed, but Madd Platform propose instead to work with informality. Their proposed adaptations apply to all levels – from the architectural detail to the city scale.

To better address and understand these phenomena, Madd began by identifying the various constituents and user groups: including citizens, the government, business owners and those with economic interests, civic society groups, and funding agencies. In Cairo, as in many other cities, decision-making processes are inherently inequitable, driven by access to power – be it through politics or financial interests. Such top-down approaches and processes however are not the only systems that exist, and other parallel user-driven processes currently flourish in the context of Cairo's informal urbanism.

It is this parallel, bottom-up process that Madd presented as an alternative mode of practice. In this process the designer begins with the user to identify their needs, and these user-driven designs are taken to the local authorities and policy makers for approval. Funding agencies are then addressed with a final design strategy for submission to the government for approval.

Madd delineated three levels of decision-making processes: that of the state, that of the citizens, and that of local authorities (*mahaleyat*), each operating with their own scale and scope. They posed the designer's role as that of navigator: integrating and coordinating these processes in a constructive manner. Examples of the discord that manifests without such navigation can be found in Cairo's Ring Road: designed to belt off the city and prevent urban expansion, it instead became, through citizen-driven initiatives, a catalyst for urban growth. Designer interventions in such cases, Madd proposed, can help reconcile the intent and interests of both parties.

Madd was established after the January 25th Revolution to address this navigational role on three levels: through policies, research and field work. They evolved micro-models that are adaptable, community responsive, and multi-sectoral and put their conception of the new role of the designer into practice in their projects in al-Kum al-Ahmar and Mit 'Uqba.

Although they presented two seemingly disparate projects, both Mokena Makeka and Madd Platform have at their core a similar intent – to achieve comprehensive community aspirations by mediating between policymakers and citizens on the ground.

Generating Incremental Models as an Approach for Urban Development

Mohamad Abotera and Ahmed Zaazaa, Madd Platform

Planners in Egypt typically think of "what should be," yet "what is" is always a different story. This is valid both on the scale of the city and of the house. We see it from street plans to facades. This seems to be a characteristic flaw of the top-down directional planning system, and the apparent need for the introduction of a different system is discussed here.

Different city stakeholders do not hold the same political power. Historically, planning and designing was always the job of privileged or empowered parties like the state and businesses. They usually have an interest in the city, a vision, and resources that may fulfill such interests. Yet, as we see on the ground, this is usually far from being the interest or the perceived goal of other common users. These users rarely remain idle in this condition and they gradually appropriate the city to their benefit, and so we find ourselves in a dual system that generates friction and injustice.

Here, we propose another work flow. We start from the least empowered stakeholder: the user. In this approach designers become the clients of common people, who direct urban design towards their interest. Such designs are then presented to the government for approval of the means by which funding can be secured – from the treasury, from businesses that seek a social responsibility, or from civil society. The popular support of politicians like sitting parliament members or parliament candidates can be leveraged to exert the necessary pressure to see these projects realized. The concept of such an approach is one of partnership of all stakeholders, a bilateral or multilateral – as opposed to unilateral – approach. It favors the interests of the people with the objective of better achieving a user-based product. The concept is to turn conflicting interest into mutual benefit, and cannot be achieved through strategic planning that oversees specificities of places and individuals, but rather has to be tailored to each case.

In our pilot project at al-Kum al-Ahmar village in Giza we took such beliefs to the testing ground. The task was to design a 1500 meter street, which is the village's main artery. The street used to be adjacent to a canal that was recently covered, giving the street extra unplanned width. We started by working with focus groups among the inhabitants and mapped practices as they are. We tried to make sure the groups were as representative as possible. This was done over several days, at several times of day, in order to form a real picture of the situation. The preliminary design was based on the actual use of space, regardless of its legal status. The design was iterated several times through meetings with the primary client – the people. Presenting a win-win scenario, the final design acknowledged all occupations and the illegal ones were legalised via an agreement that occupiers would pay rent to an NGO that maintains the street. The scheme was presented to the governorate, which formed a committee to approve funds to be released from the original budget to pave the same street.



Al-Kum al-Ahmar



Design proposal for al-Kum al-Ahmar by Madd Platform

Amr Abdel Kawi
"One of the more interesting remarks emerging from the ensuing discussions proposed a middle level to connect the disparity of top down and bottom up. It is a level represented by what can be a new form of professional institution, to give support to public and government so as to balance priorities from a neutral stand. Irrespective of whether such neutrality is possible, it is clear that a new approach needs to be explored."

Mokena Makeka
"Climate is beginning to really change how cities work and I think designers need to respond accordingly."







C- Working Sessions

C-1 Mapping Informality
C-2 Evictions and Urban Citizenship
C-3 Design Innovation and Urban Development
C-4 Community Activism and Avenues of Participation
C-5 Security, Segregation and Borders
C-6 Research/Design Interventions and the Informal City

Day Three Working Session 4

C-4

Community Activism and Avenues of Participation

Kareem Ibrahim and Diane Singerman
TADAMUN

Damon Rich
Chief Urban Designer, Division of Planning & Community Development, Newark, NJ and Founder, Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP)

Discussant:
Khaled Abdel Halim
Department of Public Policy and Administration, School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, AUC

Community Activism and Avenues of Participation

This session, moderated by Khaled Abdel Halim, of AUC's Department of Public Policy and Administration, considered the concept of long-term master planning within the framework of community participation, or lack thereof, as the case may be. Presenting two seemingly contrasting experiences, TADAMUN, represented by Kareem Ibrahim and Diane Singerman; and Damon Rich, Chief Urban Designer of Newark's Division of Planning and Community Development, presented cases from Egypt and the United States respectively. Despite the vast contrasts in context there were surprisingly similar findings in the conclusions of these experiences: that planning is significantly more successful when on the ground, real-time community participation is sought, and that not all avenues of such participation are equally successful.

Beginning with a critique of the infamous *Cairo 2050* master plan, Diane Singerman and Kareem Ibrahim addressed the necessity for urbanists to balance future planning, and regional and global concerns, with a respect for the urgent and immediate on site needs of communities. They went on to present three case studies to illustrate the research they are undertaking under the umbrella of TADAMUN: Cairo Urban Solidarity Initiative, which Singerman and Ibrahim founded to promote "realistic alternatives and solutions for existing urban problems." They presented Mit 'Uqba as an example of good governance in action, exhibiting transparency and participative engagement of the community; Nahia Urban Center as a model of cooperative partnership between local government and civil society for solid waste management; and 'Izbit Khayrallah for their constructive cooperation with the government to resist eviction, secure tenure and ultimately receive basic infrastructure.

TADAMUN's presentation highlighted in situ development in Cairo as an alternative to urban expansion to new cities, which has led to a diversion of resources from communities in need. They further advocated for the reversal of practices of previous decades that have led to the disconnection of communities from their urban environments. They outlined issues of social inclusion as important characteristics of their work with communities, as well as the right to information as articulated in their *Know Your City* initiative. Finally TADAMUN stressed the need for a democratization of local planning, and for the inclusion of urban issues as part of local governments' election agendas.

In a vastly different context, Damon Rich's presentation similarly highlighted the advantages of community participation. Bridging the community-state gap, given his former role as the founder of the Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP), and his current role as the first Chief Urban Designer for the City of Newark, New Jersey, Rich was able to provide unique insight into the participative process. He shed light on the limitations of formal avenues for such participation, in this case public hearings on urban planning. Like TADAMUN, Rich advocated for more immediate, on-the-ground and proximal engagement of communities in the planning process.

Rich illustrated these points through examples of the work of CUP, a nonprofit that uses design and art to improve civic engagement. The first involved youth education, using role-play to educate and engage New York City high school students about solid waste management issues in their communities. The second highlighted CUP's *Making Policy Public* campaign, in particular their creation of visual materials in collaboration with a union of street vendors, to provide an accessible tool for communicating street vendors' rights across cultural and language divides, as well as to advocate changes to current legislation. This initiative capitalized on existing networks and distributive capacities among street vendors, effectively engaging their participation. Finally Rich highlighted CUP's production of a toolkit designed for use in workshops by organizations trying to mobilize people around issues of affordable housing.

Throughout the working session, the urgent and often highly effective and

constructive role of community participation was emphasized across urban examples from Egypt and North America. These experiences highlighted the increasingly important role of the architect and urban planner as a mediator and negotiator of the often complex relationships between communities and state. They highlighted the multi-disciplinary role of these professionals as negotiators, activists, advocates and facilitators of crucial partnerships, towards the ultimate goal of more sustainable and inclusive urban environments which address the realistic, immediate, as well as long term needs of their communities.

Between *Cairo 2050* and Cairo 2013

Kareem Ibrahim and Diane Singerman, TADAMUN

Two years after the Egyptian Revolution in January 2011, Egyptians find themselves making the same demands: bread, freedom and social justice. To date the main principles that inspired millions of people to seize the streets of different Egyptian cities have not found their way to state policies or affected the way the government rules. For us, as urbanists, the question remains: what does the Revolution mean for the built environment, urban development, local governance, and public service provision in our cities?

As is well known, over the past few decades the Egyptian state's neoliberal top-down urban planning policy has invested the majority of public resources and investments in building new urban communities in desert areas and used land speculation as a vehicle for artificial economic growth. Moreover, the last decade of the Mubarak era witnessed the development of the unrealistic, over-ambitious, project-based plan, *Cairo 2050*, aimed at reshaping Cairo in a way that, if implemented, would have turned the city into a mutant replica of Dubai and displaced hundreds of thousands of Cairenes, especially the poor, from their homes and communities to remote desert locations.

Following the Revolution, people hoped to see a shift in state policies towards urban areas to address their urgent needs and redistribute the city's resources in a more equitable manner. However, when we learned about the Morsi government's urban development plans, questions started to arise about the state's ability to integrate and adopt the popular demands of the Revolution. Former plans of the Mubarak regime such as *Cairo 2050* resurfaced in the official discourse and were dressed up by different names and supposedly different approaches. The Ministry of Housing announced it will "immediately" start building 44 new cities across Egypt, yet this direction simply mimics the former regime's policies.

Has the government changed its approach? Not yet, unfortunately. The Morsi government was transfixed by the future and resuscitated the *Cairo 2050* plan, while plans to meet the immediate needs of people in urban areas in 2013 were completely ignored. It is always good to plan ahead and even have plans for *Cairo 2050* ready, but it is also essential to think of people's urgent needs in Cairo 2013. So, as urbanists we must ask: what are our points of intervention and strategies to change state policy? How can we instill post-revolutionary priorities that promote *in-situ* development and convince the government to invest where the majority of the people live, instead of investing limited resources in new cities in the desert, where so few live?

In fact, over the past few years, TADAMUN, along with many other urbanists, has been exploring different avenues and approaches towards achieving this long-awaited change in urban policies and practices.[1] Some of these approaches include: i) working together to build a "City for All" by aggregating knowledge about the city, state plans, and policies, all of which should be in the public realm; ii) increasing public deliberation at the local level and encouraging claims-making and targeted mobilization; iii) advocating to transform "Local Administration" to "Democratized Local Government" by promoting local elections and increased investment at the local level; and finally iv) democratizing and politicizing high modernist planning by promoting effective tools such as participatory budgeting, social audits, public hearings, etc.

But how can this be accomplished? We believe urban activists can play a key role in promoting a counter-narrative and new urban agenda that challenges the assumptions of the reigning urban paradigm. From TADAMUN's point of view, one of the most effective tools to deepen this new urban agenda is to "go local" and learn from successful urban development practices in our neighborhoods. Day after day, community activism provides us with a wealth of knowledge that can transform current urban practices. Such insights can also shift prevailing state policies towards more transparent, equitable and deliberative urban practices that build upon the physical, social, and economic assets of our local communities.

For example, the youth of the "Popular Committee of Mit `Uqba" – established during the Revolution – managed to improve and maximize the use of the limited public resources and pave more streets than those originally planned by the Local District.[2] Over the last couple of years, this active group of young people managed to claim their right to information by learning the exact amount of funding available from the Local District for this activity; and practiced social accountability to make sure that the available funds were spent correctly and that the work was technically sound.

In Nahia Village on the urbanized outskirts of Giza Governorate, an NGO established right after the Revolution by a group of local residents managed to resolve, to a large extent, the solid waste problem in their village. Neither a charitable effort nor an ad hoc one, this NGO cleverly figured out the deficiencies of the existing solid waste management system and how to resolve them through an effective and sustainable program. The program was so successful that the NGO has helped neighboring communities replicate the approach.

We can learn a great deal from the tenacity, determination, and community solidarity in 'Izbit Khayrallah, a large informal area in Cairo Governorate, where a group of local lawyers has been litigating a case over the past 30 years to obtain security of tenure for local residents. Since the early 1980s, and across different generations, this group of activist lawyers has been filing lawsuits against the state's plan to demolish their neighborhood. The courts ruled in their favor and the state retracted the demolition decrees in 1999. As a result, after 25 years, their neighborhood was finally connected to government utilities in 2010. Their legal case is still ongoing, however, as they wait for the court rulings to be implemented and gain legal title to their land.

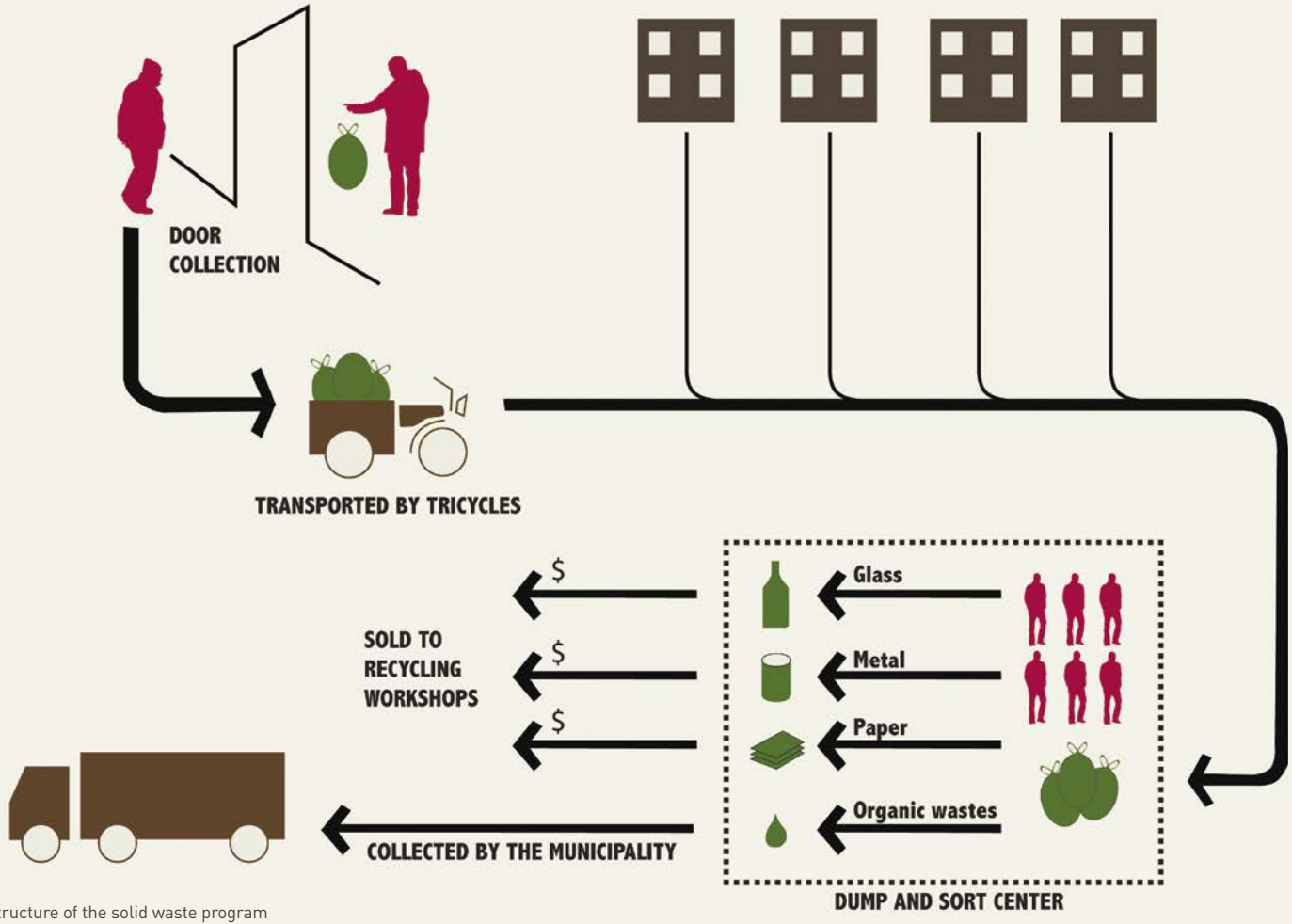
Another important structural factor in the strategies of residents and lawyers in 'Izbit Khayrallah or the *lagna sha'biyya* (popular committee) in Mit `Uqba, is that, fundamentally, local districts have few economic resources and little political power to resolve local problems. Yes, residents need to try to incorporate social justice into the built environment and local government and make more specific demands about changing problematic policies, but how can they also expand political space itself in their communities? Elected local councils were abolished in June 2011. Today, officials appointed, not elected, by the central government serve at the local level. Most of the employees of local district offices are poorly paid and are employees of national ministries, not the local district. Egypt is one of the few remaining countries across the globe that does not elect mayors or governors and thus democracy and participation at the local level is extremely weak. The national government funded 91 percent of local administrative budgets in 2011/2012 and districts raise very little revenue locally.[3] If Egypt had elected mayors and governors, not only would local government be stronger and more capable, but women and men could gain important political and administrative experience at the local level before running for higher office.

These are just a few examples of how learning from the local can inform a new urban agenda that reflects the ideals and aspirations of the Revolution. The lessons are many. In TADAMUN we believe that in order to devise and normalize such agendas we need to develop realistic development plans, build demand to target state reform, institutionalize change in urban development policies and practice, connect activists, and strengthen neighborhood activism. In conclusion, we strongly believe that reforming urban development policies and practices, and making them more transparent, deliberative and equitable, are all key to deepening local democracy in Egypt – a goal we all have to work together to achieve.

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Residents of Mit ʿUqba supervise and assist the paving project.



The structure of the solid waste program

Participants in the *Learning from Cairo* conference reinforced these ideas and pointed out strategies from Venezuela, India, South Africa, Istanbul, and New York City, inspiring the audience to think more creatively and strategically about urban change and social justice. Gautam Bhan, for example, from the Indian Institute for Human Settlements, urged urbanists and activists to pool our knowledge and share our insights and strategies, but he also warned that information and data are not enough; because residents seeking more equitable service provision, security of tenure, or affordable housing still have to struggle with private and public forces to improve their communities. TADAMUN has constructed a publicly accessible database on Egypt's cities and their challenges, with an open invitation to strengthen the public's understanding of Cairo by contributing to the database and devising new approaches to its problems. Bhan urged us to figure out ways to encourage more Egyptians and state officials to hear the claims of the residents of informal areas and underserved areas "with empathy" rather than disdain.

Some Indian communities are making up their own master plans, in concert with local municipalities, to redraw the exclusionary high modernist plans. These plans were initially developed by national authorities without local partners or participation or creating urban coalitions and organizations to articulate the diverse needs of city residents. Heba Raouf Ezzat reminded us of the importance of the "public good" and how new and old forces in Cairo are reclaiming the city and their place in it. As she said, "We can't build a republic without a public." Damon Rich, a planner and architect working for the city of Newark, New Jersey in the U.S. reminded us that the built environment is inherently collective and thus "design for deliberation" needs to be integrated into architectural and planning ethics and practices. The creative and innovative insights, and rich discussion and debate provoked by *Learning from Cairo* has already sparked rethinking and new ideas within TADAMUN and among many of our colleagues.

1: TADAMUN is a Cairo-based initiative that aims to work with residents and decision-makers to contribute to the reform of existing urban policies and practices towards more equitable, just, vibrant, and affordable Egyptian cities. See www.tadamun.info.

2: An old settlement – originally a village that is more than a century old – located within the urban fabric of the modern neighborhood of Muhandisin in Giza.

3: For further detail see TADUMUN's policy alert: *Why Did the Revolution Stop at the Municipal Level? Local 'Administration' and Centralization in Urban Egypt*. http://tadamun.info/demo/2013/06/23/why-did-the-revolution-stop-at-the-municipal-level

Khaled Abdel Halim:
"[The role of the architect as mediator] is pivotal in transforming what was for decades a conflicting relationship between communities and the state into a partnership and cooperative relationship, which can lead to avenues for genuine participation."

Damon Rich:
"In my experience, you need more than an avenue. If by avenue we mean a formal channel of participation, that formal channel is not enough ... I think that when we talk about that, we're not just talking about the channeling of desires, we're not just talking about voting, voting being a formal mechanism of 'raise your hand if you want this,' we're really talking about the rearrangement of desires ... the way that desires form ... We're talking about how in collective situations demands that we might make are different than those that we might make simply as individuals. How my problems become our problems, but also how my problems are different than our problems. Having that sense of distinction seems important."

Jennifer Bremer:
"One of the things that I think is very interesting and sort of thought provoking in a lot of this is the question of the asset-based approach as opposed to the need-based community analysis. I'm really struck by the role, for example, that local lawyers could play, and indeed all of the informal areas – although I'm thinking, now we should call them self-organized areas – and they also have a lot of teenagers with not a lot to do, many of whom are at least secondary educated, so there is I think a lot of potential to see what are the assets that could be mobilized to collect this information, bring this pressure ... etc. Another aspect would be to replicate a thing that goes in the US where communities visit each other. Chambers of Commerce are always visiting each other, and one of the things I wanted to do is to take some people from, say, some of the groups that we're working with in al-Hajjana, to take them to Ard al-Liwa', or to take them to Mit 'Uqba, to really see these projects. Because it's really good to bring them together. There's something about the field trip, about going together, like we did yesterday, for people to really see something firsthand and meet the people who were doing it is something that I think could be very useful. I'm not sure how one would bring these things together operationally, but I do think there's a lot of potential to try to mobilize community assets and try to bring people into contact at the grassroots level, which they totally are not at this point."

Kareem Ibrahim:
"As for the lawyers and how people can learn from each other, it's not only about community visits, but we present what other communities do. The results are fascinating, because they see this type of work – we don't show them examples from Brazil or India or whatever, we show them examples from Mit 'Uqba, from Ard al-Liwa' ... and this works like magic, because they see that other people like them have been able to acquire resources and have been able to implement this type of work."


TOSHIBA
VAIO



C- Working Sessions

C-1 Mapping Informality
C-2 Evictions and Urban Citizenship
C-3 Design Innovation and Urban Development
C-4 Community Activism and Avenues of Participation
C-5 Security, Segregation and Borders
C-6 Research/Design Interventions and the Informal City

Day Three Working Session 5

C-5

Security, Segregation and Borders

Aida Elkashef
Filmmaker

Lara Baladi
Visual Artist

Omnia Khalil
Urban Action

Discussant:
Samia Mehrez
The Center for Translation Studies, AUC

Security, Segregation and Borders

Featuring video presentations by an artist, a filmmaker, and an architect, this working session emphasized visual strategies that touch on issues related to security, segregation, and borders: from sexual harassment in public space, to how gender and class segregation have been impacted by the Revolution, to the physical and symbolic walls that have been erected post-Revolution.

Filmmaker Aida Elkashef presented the video she created with Salam Youssry for Op Anti-SH (Operation Anti Sexual Harassment) which depicts, through voiceover and sensitive editing, the mass sexual assault of a woman in Tahrir Square, one of more than 20 that were reported around the second anniversary of the January 25th Revolution. Underreported in the media, these assaults effected what Elkashef perceived as a campaign of violence against women, which acted to curtail their recently gained freedoms to move and express themselves in public space. In response to these assaults, Op Anti-SH organized a range of interventions: from an anti-harassment hotline, to organized patrols on the ground to aid women's safety, to media advocacy such as Elkashef's work, which aims to raise awareness and effect change.

Lara Baladi presented selections of her work undertaken before, during and post-January 25th, revealing the variety of artistic strategies she has employed to address shifting circumstances and concerns. She recounted her role as one of the organizers of *Tahrir Cinema*, which set up a screen during the July 2011 sit-in in Tahrir, that broadcast uncensored images of the Revolution, acting as an open-source media platform, as well as a public space for critical exchange. In Baladi's assessment, this engagement of public space would have been unimaginable pre-Revolution.

Looking back at her visual strategies as an artist, Baladi addressed how certain works, such as her *Borg El Amal* (*The Tower of Hope*, 2008-2009), created as a site specific work for the 11th International Cairo Biennale, would not have the same impact in present circumstances as it had at the end of the Mubarak regime. In this work, which she reflects on at length in her piece in this volume *In Retrospect*, Baladi responded to the theme of the Biennale, "The Others," by bringing the concerns and the visual and architectural language of *'ashwa'iyat* to bear on the site of the exhibition, held on government owned and operated Opera House grounds.

Baladi presented an excerpt of one of her most recent works, *Alone, Together,...In Media Res*, a three channel video installation drawn from the larger multi-media archive, including press articles, tweets and graffiti, she has been collecting since the beginning of the Revolution, titled *Vox Populi (Voice of the People)*. The simultaneous streams of video linking present and past questions of freedom, identity, and democracy, *Alone, Together,... In Media Res* addresses amongst several issues, police brutality, violence against women, democracy and spirituality, as well as the role the media and the internet play in producing a popular narrative of resistance. With this work, Baladi has created a multivalent revolutionary timeline, which extends its frame of reference to radical times and spaces beyond the Egyptian Revolution, offering perspective and critical reflection.

Architect and Urban Anthropologist Omnia Khalil presented a selection from her video *Egyptian Urban Action*, highlighting the informal community of Koukha who have been resisting government plans to remove thousands of families from their homes. Khalil's documentary portrays the challenges facing this community as it seeks to promote solutions to upgrade their neighborhood, damaged during the 1992 earthquake and left to deteriorate as a result of state policies. Khalil emphasized her filmmaking is only one of a variety of strategies she has employed as part of the *Egyptian Urban Action* initiative, who have also published reports, and organized an exhibition and public panels as advocates for marginalized residents from informal settlements in Cairo.

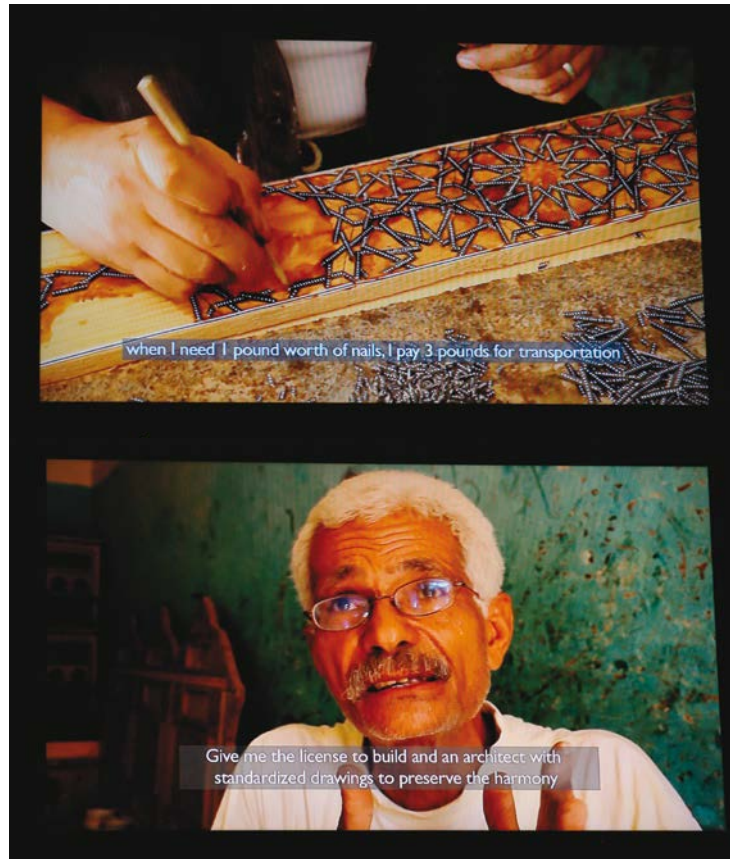
Drawing together the three presentations, moderator Samia Mehrez of AUC's Center for Translation Studies articulated the strategic employment of different visual and artistic languages employed by the panelists, as artists and activists, in their creation of critical narratives of resistance, and representations of identity. Addressing the ways in which borders, both physical and metaphorical, have been constructed and broken down in the course of the Revolution, Mehrez spoke to a general concern among the three panelists about the fall of these walls and what their implications might be. Mehrez challenged the audience to consider, "What civic responsibilities come with the fall of these walls?"

Egyptian Urban Action

Omnia Khalil

My presentation in *Learning from Cairo* included screening a segment of *Egyptian Urban Action*, a documentary movie that I made in July 2012. The movie was part of the eponymous exhibition and seminars presented in October 2012, which questioned the responsibilities of architects, initiatives and governments towards the living conditions of Cairo's residents. *Egyptian Urban Action* engaged the question of enabling inhabitants of informal areas to continue improving and developing their living conditions.

Our responsibility as architects and urban planners is not transforming or changing the economic status; we do not dream of a Parisian Cairo, or another version of New York. But as citizens in this society we are governed by our principles of humanity to seek an appropriate and improved life for neglected sectors, and to help expose the hidden potentials and positive actions within those communities. *Egyptian Urban Action* tackles such stereotyped notions as "eliminating informal areas," "the uprising of the hungry ones," and "thugs." It also resists the state's attempts to convince the rest of the population that dangers arise from residents of informal areas. The questions remain: Do residents of informal areas have the means to develop their own living conditions? Does the state provide for their basic living rights? Is providing housing units in a remote area effective enough?



Stills from Omnia Khalil's video *Egyptian Urban Action*

Sexual Assaults in Tahrir

Aida Elkashef

Many of you have heard of what we now call the "mob sexual assaults" that have taken place in Tahrir Square over the past few months, since around the second anniversary of the January 25th uprising in 2011. Everyone has been talking about it but very few of you have actually seen it, and many of you couldn't even visualize it. When my friend Salam Youssry and I decided to make a video about mob sexual assault for Op Anti-SH, it was because we wanted the unimaginable to unfold: we wanted to give you a picture.

Over 100 men surrounding one girl, a hurricane that any protester may have actually passed right next to, but thought it was one of those men's fights. Even though I was personally subjected to one of these attacks, I don't have an exact analysis to give you, and I definitely don't have any answers. I, like you, have questions and guesses.

Why Tahrir Square and not al-Ittihadiya? Why Cairo and not any of the other governorates? Is it state-organized? Is it political? Or is it simply the result of years of decay? Are they paid thugs? Or the regular, everyday harassers driven into a frenzy?

When will it stop? How can we stop it? And can we stop it?

Let's review the context as I see it:

1- Girls and women walking our country's streets are frequently subject to verbal or physical harassment.
2- Every year sexual harassment takes more violent forms. Three years ago, if you confronted your harasser he would feel ashamed and run. Now, he is likely to slap you back.
3- It has nothing to do with what you're wearing, where you're walking, how you're walking, nor your age. (For example: in Tahrir Square, a 75-year old woman was assaulted, as well as a *munaqqaba* with her children.)
4- Mob sexual assaults did happen prior to the Revolution, during Eid for instance.
5- Mob sexual assaults in Tahrir Square started once the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) took power. Yet during the months that followed Mohamed Morsi's election, the attacks became more frequent and more violent.
6- Numerous commentators claimed that women in Tahrir Square were prostitutes. These commentators included pro-Mubarak figures, SCAF members in official TV statements, and Muslim Brotherhood government officials and their sheikhs.
7- The SCAF has sexually assaulted female revolutionaries by subjecting them to 'virginity tests' after the forceful dismantling of a sit-in during March 2011. They were not charged with any crimes and did not deny their actions.[2]
8- There have also been reports of female and male political prisoners being subjected to sexual assaults by the police forces.[3, 4]
9- On 25th of January 2013, according to on-site documentation by Op Anti-SH, 22 females were subjected to mob sexual assaults in Tahrir. Most of them were hand raped, and one was raped with a knife and needed serious medical attention.
10- Many revolutionaries knew about the mob attacks from earlier instances but did not speak up about it, for fear of ruining the Square's political reputation.
11- In response to the Tahrir Square attacks, some government officials said it was unequivocally the women's fault, some of them suggesting the separation of men from women in protests, schools, etc.

It used to be a psychological war, and now it's a physical one, between men and women, body to body, a war between female revolutionaries who will not surrender the Square, nor surrender to fear, and those attackers whoever they are.

It used to be a psychological war, and now it's a physical one, about survival and existence, about spatial ownership and the right to be. It's a war over public space.

During the battles between the people and the police, just when you are fighting your way through to the frontlines, there is always this man who pulls you away, asking you to stay in the back because you'll get hurt. He tells you

that he and the other men will fight for you.

He means well, I know, but it's frustrating. He doesn't understand that I am here to stand side by side with him against our enemy. He doesn't understand that I too am useful on the frontlines and that I too, as a girl, am willing to take the risks that he is taking.

When we took the streets on the 25th of January 2011 we chanted "bread, dignity and freedom." I come from an upper class family, so clearly I'm not starving. I have a good house, a car, and a well-paid job, so what I really seek is freedom. But I knew that no one can be free until social justice is achieved for all. I knew that a lot of people were poor because some others were rich – it's not luck, it's the system, it's us. And so social justice was my fight as much as freedom was. I also knew that there was a long way ahead of us before achieving social justice, and so the battle for freedom will always be postponed. I was wrong, you cannot separate social justice from freedom; they come together. We need to fight on all fronts, right now.

It doesn't matter whether it's organized or not, because we may never know. It doesn't matter because sexual harassment surrounds us everywhere, all the time. We might have come out of this Tahrir nightmare with one positive result, as bad as it was: women are finally speaking, attacking back and fighting their own battles, without mediators, without holding back. For that I'm grateful, and for that reason I'm optimistic.

1: Operation Anti Sexual Harassment, an activist group based in Cairo, whose goal is to prevent sexual harassment and assault.

2: Al Jazeera, 2012. *Egypt clears 'virginity test' military doctor*. [online] Available at: http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/03/201231110431926293 7.html [Access date unknown]

3: Daily News Egypt, 2013. *Reports of sexual assaults in police stations* [online]. Available at: http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2013/02/18/report-of-sexual-assaults-in-police-stations [Access date unknown]

4: Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights, 2013. منظمات حقوقية تتقدم ببلاغ في واقعة تعذيب محمد وأحمد حسن مصطفى بسجن الحضرة ضد وزير الداخلية ومدير عام مصلحة السجون ومأمور السجن وضابطين Available at: http://eipr.org/pressrelease/2013/01/13/1582 [accessed 5th September 2013]. In Arabic.

In Retrospect

Lara Baladi

When I assess my artistic production both in the last decade of the Mubarak regime, and in the face of seismic change in Egypt, it becomes clear that my work, and that of many artists of my generation, was on many levels dictated and informed by the rigid, stagnant political context of the last 30 years.

My memory of Cairo as a child is of an image of the pyramids in the distance, pointing to the sky. As we drove towards them on occasional family excursions along the Pyramids Road, the landscape unfolded, forever flat and green. This is a visual cliché of Egypt's countryside, almost biblical. By contrast, urban Egypt is growing so fast today that some experts predict its original agricultural land is well on the way to disappearance.

My sound and construction work in-situ, *Borg El Amal* (*The Tower of Hope*, 2008-2009), was a response to an invitation to participate as an Egyptian artist in the 11th International Cairo Biennale. The subject of the Biennale was "The Others". In this official governmental context, it clearly appeared to me that "The Others" were those long forgotten by the state.

Borg El Amal was directly inspired by Cairo's *'ashwa'iyat* (literally "haphazard things"), commonly translated in this context as 'informal housing'. These illegally built neighborhoods, comprising 60 percent of construction in Cairo, expand relentlessly in and around the capital like mushrooms after the rain, suffocating the fertile soil beneath them. "The Red City," as some architects call it, consists of endless rows of almost identical brick and cement buildings, long stretches of sometimes windowless towers, informal constructions lacking in many public amenities. Often referred to as slums, they are broadly regarded as dangerous and crime-ridden spaces. Since the Revolution, the collapse of law and order has allowed them to multiply faster than ever.

Watching Cairo expand and spread over the last decades has brought me to ask what lies in store for its people. It seems to me that these *'ashwa'iyat* represent a false promise – the promise of a heavenly new way of life amidst green pastures, a vain hope for a better tomorrow. The stark reality is that these Towers of Babel are rarely finished and that the green fields in which they are planted are now subject to urban sprawl and refuse.

The accompanying images of the *'ashwa'iyat* were taken in 2009, a stone's throw from the Cairo ring road. Al-Da'iri, as this highway is called, is the new road to the pyramids. Its flyovers soar above the ocean of red bricks and cement, beyond which the pyramids rise up in all their majesty.

Borg El Amal was a three-story tower built on the grounds of the Cairo Opera House, an official governmental space and military base and most probably one of the most expensive pieces of real estate in Egypt. The tower was made from the same materials (cement foundation and steel reinforced frame, holding red brick walls) as the Red City, and constructed in the same 'informal' way. As people living in the *'ashwa'iyat* do, I "borrowed" the state's electricity and water available on the ground to build it. The visitor could isolate him or herself and go inside while listening to the sound component of *Borg El Amal*, the *Donkey Symphony*, in collaboration with Nathan Robin Mann, specially composed for this work. The symphony echoed the voice of the city, the cry of the Red City.

Along with millions of *fallahin*, or peasant farmers, the donkey has made the transition from the cliché of a biblical landscape into this new reality of the *'ashwa'iyat*. The donkey's braying has always broken the silence of the Egyptian countryside, and now it breaks through the noise of the Red City in an agonizing cry – is it in ecstasy or in despair? This fine line between heaven and hell resonates in all of my experiences of the *'ashwa'iyat*. In popular belief, the donkey represents submission, stupidity, stubbornness and even evil. In urban Cairo it is the garbage collectors' mode of transportation, the beast of burden that connects Egypt to its past – humble, patient and wise. All of these associations inspired me to instigate the creation of the *Donkey Symphony*: a sort of requiem, a hymn to the beauty that lies in horror, a hymn to hope in the midst of misery.

During the construction of the tower, the director of the Palace of Arts, where the Biennale was hosted, called me in a panic and asked me to hide the 'horrific' site. Suzanne Mubarak, the wife of the then President Mubarak, was opening the Cairo International Film Festival the next day. To my surprise,

the builders obscured the tower with material traditionally used for funerals or wedding tents. At the end of the Biennale, the authorities demanded that I destroy the tower, vandalizing my sound installation, tearing and cutting the electrical wires. This act, commonly practiced by state Security in the *'ashwa'iyat*, ultimately completed my work.

Although *Borg El Amal* would have the same relevance now given the ongoing sociopolitical issues raised by the *'ashwa'iyat*, to make such a work in that context would not be strategically appropriate today since the Revolution freed speech and opened all spaces as potential spaces for art. Its location in the grounds of the Opera House constituted, in the Mubarak days, a blatant defiance of the rules of censorship and confronted the state in its front garden.

Even for the Middle East, with all its upheavals, the Arab Revolutions of 2011 are the most significant and therefore pivotal episodes of its recent history. An artist is not necessarily a revolutionary, but art can be revolutionary. *Borg El Amal*, along with other works, created around the same time by artists, such as Amal Kenawy's public performance *Silence of the Lambs* (2009), pinpointed pressing issues afflicting Egyptian society at the end of the Mubarak era; in the case of Kenawy's work, this was servile social apathy from years of police brutality and humiliation. Such works highlighted the emergency of the situation and the tension that was escalating in Egypt prior to January 25th 2011.

Furthermore, during the final ten years of the old regime, many artists created works that were both heavy in content and/or physically heavy and large in scale – Wael Shawky's installation, *The Green Land Circus* (2005) is a case in point. As William Wells, Director of The Townhouse Gallery in Cairo has noted:

> In his work, Shawky uses the context of the circus, in particular its role as a container of 'abnormal activity' and exhibitor of physical irregularities, to animate the symbolic role of freak-show entertainment used to attract and repel spectators while also compelling their voyeurism. The video becomes an examination of what is and is not acceptable and how these lines and rules are ever-changing according to seemingly random and unregulated shifts in space and time.

These strategies mirrored the leadenness of that regime. The role of art then, was to stir up the silt at the bottom of the stagnant lake and break its calm surface.

Today, and since the beginning of the Revolution, works of art produced for a local audience are almost diametrically opposed to this in nature. A dam broke the very first days, so fast and so forcefully, that it gave way to a deluge of creativity, a massive long-repressed expression of the self that finally burst free. Young artists grabbed the Revolution's momentum and responded, surfing that wave, yes, to the constantly evolving political situation. Graffiti, in the form of political slogans, painted murals and stenciled revolutionary iconography has transformed many public spaces. In the virtual realm too, the artistic gesture, freed and democratized, has become a kind of contemporary digital version of the Polaroid. Artists and citizens alike use photography, video, political satire, and so on in social media and blogs, intending to make an instantaneous impact on political life.

This artistic discourse is not political art as we know it, but a form of art that I call "artivism," born – like collage was between the two World Wars – from the need to confront and reject the political system, and by extension the contemporary art market and scene as well. Art that acts as a weapon against the oppressing state. Similarly to how collage evolved, these new forms of art have become more and more elaborate. Powerful individual voices are continuing to emerge and have already become an inherent part of our daily life and culture.

This text reflects part of a larger presentation by the author as part of the Learning from Cairo conference, which can be viewed online at www.learningfromcairo.org



From the series Hope. 'The Red City.' Informal architecture. Cairo, Egypt, 2008-2009.



Borg El Amal (in Arabic, '*The Tower of Hope*'). Ephemeral construction and sound installation (*Donkey Symphony* composed for the project). Red customized bricks and cement. Grand Cobra award winning project at the Cairo International Contemporary Art Biennale 2008-2009.

Aida Elkashef:
"For me the case is not harassment only but it is about expropriation of the street, during the 18 days of the revolution people started to feel that they not only restored their public place but owned it as well ...That was how women felt especially throughout the 18 days, that they owned their space in the Square.
So who of us own the place? Of course women are always regarded as the most vulnerable group. Therefore, a part of the methodology focuses on increasing our numbers and appearing more often in the media without fear. Also, many girls gave their testimonies on TV, let alone that there are many pages now that tackle the issue of sexual harassment and takes photographs of harassers. You can find different lists of sexual harassers on Facebook everyday, with their names, plate number of their cars, etc. So, I really think there is a physical war, and not a moral one as it was in the beginning. It turned into a physical war, in which men and women fight and use violence to determine who has the right to own the place."

Omnia Khalil:
"Well, as for sexual harassment, this is not a new phenomenon, we are all familiar with it ... It is a fight that will never end ... We do not want to be excluded and we do not want anyone to defend us. I want to be able to leave my house at two in the morning to go buy a sandwich just because I am as crazy as that. This is my right. These are the concepts of citizenship. It means that I am a citizen who has the right to walk in the street, regardless of my clothes, my career, my identity, or anything else."



C- Working Sessions

C-1 Mapping Informality
C-2 Evictions and Urban Citizenship
C-3 Design Innovation and Urban Development
C-4 Community Activism and Avenues of Participation
C-5 Security, Segregation and Borders
C-6 Research/Design Interventions and the Informal City

Day Three
Working Session 6

C-6
Research/Design Interventions and the Informal City

Lindsey Sherman
Urban-Think Tank, Caracas/Zurich; Chair of Architecture and Urban Design, ETH Zurich

Dina Shehayeb
Shehayeb Consult

Discussant:
Magda Mostafa
Department of Construction and Architectural Engineering, School of Sciences and Engineering, AUC

Research/Design Interventions and the Informal City

The impact of the global economic crisis and the consequent changing dynamic of job procurement has necessitated the learning of different modes and processes of practice – the architect as mediator, collaborator, activist, advocate, legitimizer, and agent of change; and the emergence of what can be called the "guerrilla architect."

This session sought to provoke discussion about architects' design interventions in informal city structures at different scales, and the research that underpins them. These practices were demonstrated through the work of Lindsey Sherman of Urban-Think Tank (U-TT) and ETH Zurich, and Dina Shehayeb of Shehayeb Consult.

A number of questions emerged from the presentations and subsequent discussion: What is informality? What lessons can be learned from "informal" urban practices? And consequently: Is the conventional role of the architect still valid? Should we redefine the architect's role? And if so, what might this new role be?

The session questioned whether informality can be defined in relation to regulation, legalization and standards, and its variance from these standards. This included a discussion of whether the terms "formal" and "informal" are being used to refer to the physical structure of neighborhoods, their inhabitants, or both. The implication of this distinction, it was suggested, is that the informal can become formal if policy is revised to include informal practices.

The definition of informality was further problematized with respect to questions of temporality versus permanence. Much of the informality in Cairo and other cities was originally viewed as a short-lived, outlying practice, to be tolerated until it could be eradicated. However, given its organic, incremental growth, and consequent spread, informality can be seen to have moved beyond a marginal practice, requiring a paradigm shift in definitions.

Also made apparent through the two presentations was the varying definition of the informal between North and South, as well as across the Southern hemisphere. Definitions of informality in South America, for example, were shown to be related to building quality and the availability of infrastructure and services; while Egyptian definitions seem to have primarily hinged on legality, with well-built, often robust constructions being viewed as informal. It quickly became clear that a universal definition of informality would be impossible, and that this phenomenon manifests in a variety of patterns and forms, across Northern and Southern expressions.

The fate of heritage was also presented as increasingly threatened in the midst of the formal/informal debate. In cities such as Cairo, where informality is commonly found in pockets of the formal and historic city, and protection through legislation is lacking in efficacy to say the least, heritage is under serious, and in many cases irreversible, threat.

Finally, and possibly most importantly, it was posed that if, as in Cairo, 60-70 percent of a city's population is defined as informal then what is the "formal" that we are contrasting it to, if it is not the majority?[1] Is what we call "informal" actually emerging as the "form?" When something is no longer an outlying and exceptional situation, can it still be considered in that construct, as the antithesis of form?

This brought the discussion to ways forward in the semantics, and consequently the practice, of urbanization. It was proposed that perhaps alternative nomenclatures such as "self-organized," "demand-driven," or "organic" are more appropriate terminologies than "informal."

Through the two presentations an attempt was made to answer the question "what lessons can be Learned from informal urban practices?" Lindsey Sherman, through her presentation of U-TT's *Centro de Açcao Social por Música* and the *Torre David* research project, demonstrated the importance

of focusing on low-cost, low-tech, high impact interventions, and working creatively with authentic potentialities. She postulated that a wealth of urban knowledge is accesible, not in the study of the formal versus informal, but in the study of the margins where they meet. The projects she presented showed the advantage of working in the zone between top-down and bottom-up. Sherman demonstrated that informality exists as layers of informality within formality, and that we as designers can learn from this hybridity where it exists. Appropriation and adaptation can be learned as processes and constructs for iterative interventions. The conclusive approach of a "Syncretic City," as she terms it – built on, in, over and with existing structures – is a lesson that can be learned from such informal practices.

Following her analysis of the characteristics of informal areas she has studied both in Egypt and internationally, Dina Shehayeb presented a compelling summative argument: if informal settlements are self-financed, demand-driven, compact, "walk-able," self-sufficient, grow incrementally, have low-energy demands, and provide a work-home proximity – how can they still be viewed as failed architecture?

The session concluded with a proposal of how designers, urbanists and educators could adapt to or incorporate these alternate modes of practice. There was a consensus that not only are new roles emerging for practitioners, but that this shift may beg the question: are conventional roles still valid? Some of the emergent roles discussed included: the guerrilla architect; the architect as a mediator between top-down and bottom-up approaches, the architect as a collaborator (between trades, communities, policy makers, craftsmen etc); and the architect as an activist, an advocate, legitimizer, empowerer and agent of change. The importance of data collection, objective research and multi-modal and multi-dimensional mapping as tools were presented as contributing to a platform from which to move forward. Finally it was posed that in addition to all that was discussed, the impact of the global economic crisis and the consequent changing dynamic of job procurement has necessitated learning different modes and processes of practice.

1 These statistics were based on World Bank, *Arab Republic of Egypt: Building a Platform for Urban Upgrading in the Greater Cairo Region*, Draft final report, Sustainable Development Department, Middle East and North Africa Region, June 2012 as presented by David Sims in *Understanding Cairo's Informal Development* at the Cities in Transition: Public Engagement and Civic Design panel on day 1 of the conference. For video documentation see: http://learningfromcairo.org/program/opening-plenary

Research and Intervention in Informal Areas

Dina Shehayeb

Multidisciplinary research is essential to revealing the different facets of the dynamic reality of everyday life in Egypt. There is also a need for transdisciplinary theoretical and methodological tools to connect and understand those realities while sustaining the integration of tangible and intangible aspects of the built environment (physical, social, economic, cultural and psychological).

This presentation focused on research methodologies that deal with the phenomenon of informal areas. These methodologies can assist in the current trend of local initiatives where communities are seeking partnership with professionals. The presentation outlined integrative research methods that offer deeper substantive understanding, an understanding that is needed to build the cumulative knowledge necessary to deal with contemporary urban issues.

This unconventional research has also been integrated into professional intervention; in the problem formulation stage of the design process and in translating research outputs into design and planning objectives and criteria. Researchers, professionals and community members together have applied integrative concepts to analyze community needs and wants, and then to translate them into design objectives and design criteria. This is part of a participatory design thinking tool that was complemented by participatory design workshops where designers verified their initial design ideas based on these deduced objectives and criteria. Examples include the actual participatory design of a vegetable and fruit market in Historic Cairo (Tablita Market), as well as a hands-on training of professionals, city officials and community members for the *Ngunyumu School Development Plan*, Nairobi, Kenya.

The professional's role in partnering with local initiatives in informal areas is therefore mainly to add value to the collective local knowledge that communities are already implementing in the production of their urban form. Participatory design is not about doing what people say they want, it is about achieving the goals underlying what they say they want. The value added by the professional lies in bringing in more ideas and solutions than those that the community members may contribute based on their experience and knowledge. Professionals also add value by bringing to the attention of the local community considerations beyond their daily concerns, and where necessary, professionals can also play a role in negotiating conflicting needs between different groups in the community.

In conclusion, research is an integrative part of intervention in 'informal' areas and should be seen as an exchange of knowledge between people with different yet complementary types of know-how from the problem formulation stage to the implementation stage of intervention.

Conclusive bullet points:

- Integrative, multi- and trans-disciplinary research methodologies are appropriate means of tackling today's urban phenomena of informality.
- Such research methods can inform practice at both the problem definition stages as well as in the development of planning objectives and criteria.
- Participatory design is not about doing what people say they want, it is about achieving the goals underlying what they say they want.
- (Emerging roles of the practitioner) Professionals can also play a role in negotiating conflicting needs between different groups in the community.
- Research in informal areas needs to be seen as an exchange, rather than an imposition, of knowledge.



Korogocho children at the Ngunyumu Primary School in Nairobi Kenya after taking part in participatory design and action planning to transform their school into their dream community center.



Ngunyumu School pupils, parents and teachers train to formulate their needs and wants into a school Development Plan in 2012. By September 2013, the first fruit is reaped with dance and sports programs.

Dina Shehayeb:
"Urban planning and city planning produced by consultants and presented formally to the government are not appropriate, and this is perfectly evident from the new cities which are abandoned because of being inappropriate. Urban planners set wrong planning, because they don't know how people live, and then we blame people, because they live in slums and abandon formal building ... Our way of learning must be changed; it must be multidisciplinary and humble, we have to learn from people, sociologists and anthropologists should co-operate with us and help us to understand."

Magda Mostafa:
"It is necessary to redefine what we mean by 'informal' ... is it about regulation, legalization and standardization and the consequent variance from them? Is it therefore a distinction of right and wrong? What is the implication of this distinction? Is it about temporality versus permanence, flexible versus fixed? Is it about ownership? Is it pre-determined and pre-planned versus organic and incremental? When we talk about formal versus informal are we talking about the users or the structure or either or both? Where does heritage stand in the formal/informal debate? Interestingly informal will become formal if we redefine policy and regulation ... Perhaps alternative nomenclatures such as 'self-organized' are more appropriate terminology as opposed to 'informal'."



3/ REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Closing the Loop: Teaching What We Learned From *Learning from Cairo* - An Academic Perspective

Magda Mostafa

As an architectural academic engaged in any critical discourse, the question posed is not only "what can be learned?" but "what now can be taught?" From each experience, particularly those that bring together the plethora of proficiencies, perspectives and geographic diversity that was present at the *Learning from Cairo* conference, one must leave with a critical understanding of whether, and how, such an experience can inform our teaching. In this manner we may revisit, revise and continually revive our pedagogy.

The unique and fleeting moment we are now experiencing in Cairo requires questioning, a questioning that seems to revolve around three main topics: first, urban informality, and the necessity, or lack thereof to define or even redefine it; second, lessons we can learn for this so-called informality; and third the necessity to redefine and adapt, perhaps even pose novel modes for the role of the architect today and in the future. It would be a disservice for such a debate to remain confined to the hypothetical and it is only responsible for it to extend to both the professional realm as well as the academic. The purpose of this discussion is to present the role of the latter.

So how can architectural academia respond to this shifting climate? A climate where the majority of the built environment is conceived and implemented outside of the construct of conventional practice? Where the majority of the architectural production in our city exists without architects? How can we further propagate a singular top-down mode of practice in our teaching when commonly that "top" – be it policy, local government or financial institution – is malfunctioning at best and corrupt or absent at its worst? When this conventional mode is only viable in neatly packaged projects with clear financing, educated clients and formal frameworks? How can we teach our students, the architects of the future generation, to be equipped to operate only within a small portion of the built environment – ignoring the massive built environment and user groups often represented on maps as solid black "informal areas?" It seems the phenomena of informal urbanism can no longer be blacked-out, and it is time for academia to begin educating its architects-to-be at least to be minimally aware, if not proficiently trained, to address the potentials and problems of such parallel modes of existence in our built environment.

The answer to this cannot be an either/or scenario. Conventional practice must be viewed as the scaffolding of standards, codes and best practices, with the limitations this may present in our current socioeconomic environment – but nevertheless as the only foundation on which good architecture can emerge. On the other hand informal phenomena and modes of development of the built environment can no longer be ignored and labeled as something that should be tolerated until they can be removed. Informal practice – for lack of a better word – in Cairo can no longer be ignored, particularly post-January 25th 2011, when the ethos of an entire population shifted from top-down to bottom-up; when taking things into one's own hands seems to have become the modus operandi of the day. New roles must emerge to mitigate these two poles of every practice – in policymaking, governance, education and most particularly the future of the built environment.

With this the architect begins to emerge as the mediator of two seemingly conflicting poles. We need to begin educating our students to prepare for this role. Armed with the technical knowledge of design best practices, architectural students should begin engaging in such exchanges, and become exposed to a new role as facilitator between communities and policymakers, on several scales. Community based learning practice (CBL) is an excellent pedagogical model for this.

In order to navigate this process appropriately however, students must be equally versed in the other pole of the equation – the informal. But to do this we must perhaps first redefine, or at least critically debate the negative connotations associated with this terminology. For the greater half of the past century and since decision-makers historically began cordoning off user groups in distinct urban hinterlands, informality has been the general term associated with slums, ghettos, squatter settlements and any urban development formed outside of legislative frameworks. With this came a

perceived temporality as to the existence of such settlements, as areas that would eventually be brought up to standard and legalized or destroyed, clearing the path for the formal. Yet with the proliferation and expansion of such urban areas in many of the world's developing cities, this temporality has become permanence, and with the shift in socioeconomic trends from top-down to bottom-up, informality needs to be looked at in a very different light.

It is this different light that was the ethos of the *Learning from Cairo* conference, and which must now be shifted to our architectural pedagogy.

Furthermore, and on a global scale, the economic platform upon which architecture performs has shifted. The current economic crisis has seen the demise of the "star-chitecture" of the 1990s and early 2000s. Simply put, we can no longer afford to build the way we have been building, and environmental sustainability is not the only reason. As Ian Harris, director of the documentary *ArchiCulture* (2013) which discusses the pedagogy of studio education, notes: "Design school[s are] feeding into the top-down approach of the omnipotent starchitect."[1] With the demise of this praxis, education must shift to accommodate the emerging role of the architect as a promoter of his or her work, rather than as a recipient of commissions – perhaps even to the guerilla architect that designs for a cause, without necessarily having a client. As Bjarge Ingels of the architects BIG, Denmark (himself perhaps a "star-chitect") commented at the 2012 Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA) conference on change in architectural education, architects must now define a perceived problem, research and develop a design scheme to address it, and then market it to the various stakeholders and clients. The clients are no longer coming with the flux they were in previous decades; architects need to reach out, educate them and help them define where their investments can go towards design. Architectural students, with their hypothetical scenarios often seen in the studio, are perhaps well versed in this model, but as educators we must gradually shift the responsibility towards the student to define, research, develop, and design their own projects. They have to know how to seek out the client and sell them on a project, rather than vice versa.

To these ends, a new lexicon of theory needs to be developed and taught, including approaches such as that presented by Lindsey Sherman in the works of the multidisciplinary design studio Urban-Think Tank (U-TT)'s "Syncretic City" – an architecture built "on, in and with the existing city." This is embodied in such projects as the *MetroCable* and *Torre David* in Caracas, Venezuela. Such projects serve to shift the perception of informal settlements from parasitic to symbiotic, from one of negativity to one of potential. In their work U-TT heed a call "to see in the informal settlements of the world a potential for innovation and experimentation, with the goal of putting design in the service of a more equitable and sustainable future" (U-TT, 2012).[2] Other theories such as Revedin's idea of the "Radicant City," a relation of exchange with the city, rather than imposition, are viable shifts with which all architecture students of today need to be familiar. Such theories help support the growth of architects as advocates, mediators and facilitators of a built environment that addresses the city comprehensively and objectively, without prejudice yet equally with expertise.

In a similar paradigm shift, architectural institutions internationally are moving towards expanding their understanding of architectural practice, and consequently education, to be more comprehensively responsible. The main call towards this end is to question the status quo. In a 2013 communiqué, Albert Dubler, current president of the Union Internationale des Architectes (UIA) urged architects to take a "leadership role ... and stop doing things 'as usual' ... [and to] raise awareness of the absolute need for collaboration with all stakeholders of all types of human settlements." This culminated in the UIA's current responsible architecture project. Under the theme of the 2011 World Architecture Day, Dubler called for "architecture as a human right," and it falls on the shoulders of educators to train architects that will understand, acknowledge and uphold that human right responsibly and comprehensively.

We consequently need to broaden the roles of our future architects. Without compromising their proficiency as generalists, we must expand the field of users of which they must be aware, and for whom they will design, and the

environments for which they must take responsibility. When the "in"formal (anti-formal) is no longer the exception, is it really still "in"formal? When the informal becomes the majority, how can we call conventional training mainstream? How much more than the majority of our urban areas does the informal have to become before we train our students to understand it, address it and ultimately work with it – rather than ignore it and work to eradicate it.

This is not a call to romanticize informal settlements, with their issues of safety, hygiene, lack of viable infrastructure, and so forth. However, as Dina Shuhayeb commented during the conference: when a built environment is self-financed, demand-driven, grows incrementally, is compact, has low energy demands, is walkable, self-sufficient and provides a work-home proximity, how can it be viewed as a failed architecture? If anything, this list of characteristics describing informal settlements in Cairo reads almost like a sustainability index. Again this is not a call for one solution or another, but rather a call to study these environments, and acknowledge their existence – indeed, their potentialities and strengths – and work on, in and with them, symbiotically, and to train our students to do so.

1: *Archiculture*, 2013. [Film] Directed by Ian Harris. USA: Arbuckle Industries.
2: Urban Think-Tank, 2012. *Torre David - Informal Vertical Communities*. Press release, date unknown.

Learning From the Paradox

May Al-Ibrashy

I did not set out to start this short text on *Learning from Cairo* by referencing Bernard Tschumi. In fact, it seems perverse to do so especially given that the point of the symposium was to start to formulate theories grounded in our local realities and possibly liberated from the yoke of Western theory. Yet this is what came to me in what will be an unapologetic exercise in free association. So here goes ...

Bernard Tschumi talks of "eROTicism" – the pleasure of excess that comes from architecture being a practice caught within a paradox. It is a practice that is very much intertwined with the voluptuousness of the *now*, inextricably tied to the grittiness of the moment; both the moment of design as the architect mentally conceives and physically constructs the building, and the moment of interaction with the building as the user constantly recreates it through the simple act of moving through space and time. Yet, paradoxically, architecture is also grounded in a broader historical awareness of its place in theory and its role in the constant retelling of history, both as a building-crucible constantly acquiring meaning, and as part of a corpus of the built environment that informs our knowledge of what architecture is.[1] The same – multiplied by as many buildings, streets and squares as there are globally – goes for cities.

This also applies to gatherings such as *Learning from Cairo*. We sit. We talk and listen. We learn. In some cases we are exhilarated by what we learn. Yet this all happens with an awareness that as we sit and discuss Cairo, Cairo continues to happen outside our walls. And at the back of our minds is a nagging sense of inadequacy and guilt. Is this time better spent doing – not talking? But what do we do? We need to talk in order to know. At a time when much has been done in Egypt (revolution with a capital R!) it has been drowned in the sea of talk that followed. Yet we need to talk in order to understand. What about everyone out there who is reshaping our city without stopping to think or understand? Do we continue to talk until most of what we will come to realize was worth saving is no longer there? Especially given that we mostly talk to each other, not to the city's residents and administrators.
I am not an urbanist. I would never dare to embark on a field that is so ambitious – I both respect and pity those who do. I am an architect, a heritage advocate and – I hope – an educator and cultural operator. I know that we need to continue to talk. I know that the circle of talk has to widen. It also needs to go beyond the confines of academic walls into the city. And we need to work as we talk – and to make mistakes and learn from them. We must learn from the failures and successes we make with our own hands – in addition to those of others. And we must be brutally honest in sharing those mistakes and successes. We must suffer through the daily grind of the switch from the here and now to history and beyond. Even more, we must cultivate the ability to make it happen more frequently, and the vigilance required to turn these seemingly disorientating shifts into lucid thoughts and ideas. This is how we make new theory. This is what we need to teach in our universities. This is what we need to meet and discuss. This is the intention we need to arm ourselves with every time we go to the street to work with its people. This is how we learn from Cairo.

1: Tschumi, B.,2008 Architecture and Transgression. In H. F. Mallgrave & C. Contandriopoulos eds. 2008 *Architectural Theory*. London: Blackwell Vol. II: pp 448-451

Learning to Take Cooperation Beyond Rhetoric

Jennifer Bremer

The *Learning from Cairo* conference maintained a high level of energy by bringing together experienced professionals from Egypt and from middle-income countries including India, South Africa, Venezuela, and Turkey. This enabled the dialogue to go beyond the usual platitudes and reiteration of familiar arguments to bring in new ideas and energizing case studies with evident relevance to Egypt.

The examples given demonstrated very different ways to design and carry out a dialogue between professional urban developers and community members to introduce creative but workable solutions to urban challenges. The problem-solving approach, combining local knowledge with technology and creativity, came through as much more valuable and effective than the large-scale planning-driven process that Egypt has been using. The latter tends to result in big plans that never make it off the page (thankfully, in the case of *Cairo 2050*) whereas a small-scale approach focusing on concrete, achievable improvements can be far more effective.

A second lesson that emerged repeatedly from the program was the need to involve community members actively in the design and implementation of urban upgrading. This cannot be just a sterile "consultation" in which residents are assembled to bless a series of actions that have already been designed by "experts," but an ongoing collaboration that assumes that residents will contribute not just needs but ideas, financial and human resources, and the local knowledge essential to any program's success.

Information technology – from GIS (geographic information system) to participatory database development – creates new ways to make this collaboration a reality. More people can collaborate through technology-supported dialogue and virtual design than ever before and crowdsourcing can generate information and ideas in ways that would have been impossible even a few years ago.

These experiences underscore the high price that Egypt is paying for its ongoing fixation on highly centralized, bureaucratic decision-making. While the planners focus on grandiose schemes that will never see the light of day, the people are building, and continue to build, the cities of the future, street by street and house by house. If these two powerful forces could collaborate on the basis of equality and mutual respect, a lot more could get done.

In summary:

- Problem-solving approaches, combining local knowledge with technology and creativity, can be much more valuable and effective than the large-scale planning-driven process that Egypt has been using.
- Communities must be actively involved in the design and implementation of urban upgrading in an ongoing collaboration that assumes that residents will contribute not just needs but ideas, financial and human resources, as well as local knowledge.
- Information technology can create new ways of collaboration using GIS, crowdsourcing, social media, etc.
- The way forward may be at the intersection of top-down planning-based decision making with bottom-up grassroots reality of how our cities are developing. At the moment there is a mutual denial and gap between these two forces, which must be bridged to move forward responsibly.

Notes from a Cairo University Window

Nabeel Elhady

Learning from Cairo for me was an opportunity to rethink some important issues related to the Egyptian built environment. The intense discussions and debate regarding informality made it clear that a lack of understanding with respect to issues such as legality, tenure structures, and economics inhibit proper approaches to solutions. Further input from the local level is necessary for this understanding to take place.

Defining informality in Cairo in comparison to relevant international contexts proved to be challenging, leading me to question its applicability. To my mind, what is called for is to place informality organically in the wider urban discourse in Egypt. Gautam Bhan's insight – that the question of informality in Egypt needs to focus on the issue of legitimacy, rather than formality – can be extended to help rethink the whole of the Egyptian urban environment.

Assessing local conditions and building a credible analysis are critical steps towards evaluating these urban phenomena. Yet given a lack of relevant data, or occasionally-inconsistent statistics, more credible and inventive ways of generating data are needed if we are to pursue trustworthy investigations leading to grounded conclusions.

The issue of quality of data sets brings Egyptian academia to the forefront of this discussion. The failure of academics to address informality can be seen not only in the neglect of study on this majority sector of Egypt's contemporary built environment; but also in a deeper failure to address the structure of the urban environment as a whole. The consequences of such continuing oversights will inhibit serious educational and research efforts, which are prerequisites to a decent and just urban environment in Egypt.

The denial of major urban challenges facing Cairo, and the serious efforts to bypass them were evident in the *Learning from Cairo* Desert Cities tour. This tour can be seen as a model for discussing real urban issues in the city though hands-on observation. It has the potential to span all kinds of urban typologies (historic, formal, informal and new urban communities) and so on to generate real debate not only among students of urban environments, but also for citizens of the city at large.

These citizens of Cairo did not make up the majority of the audience that attended the symposium. Despite invitations sent by the organizers to both governmental and academic public institutions, their limited participation raised the question whether public institutions are prepared to engage in this kind of forum. I believe that follow-up events have to prioritize public outreach, as well as addressing specific urban challenges in an attempt to resolve tangible issues. This event should be viewed as the beginning of a serious Cairene urban forum.

Learning from Cairo is an Excuse!

Amr Abdel Kawi

Learning from Cairo is an excuse! For many of us, living in Cairo is a daily learning experience, always diverse and always surprising. Posing this question in an academic setting is an excuse for reflection, and for applying theoretical frameworks to the fluid conditions of lived reality. However, in light of recent events in this part of the world, where that reality has been subjected to an extremely critical questioning, the traditional theoretical frameworks themselves need to also be subjected to critical questioning. Sitting in an academic context in the heart of post-Revolution Tahrir Square, applying interdisciplinary overlays on transparencies reflecting that which we call Cairo, had a surreal quality to it. A quick peek through a narrow window onto Mohamed Mahmoud Street was enough to jolt one back to reality. And that reality is a different kind of reality ... something changed ... and it is not just the toppling of a dictator!

To a large extent, this event represents more of a tipping point giving rise to a process of change not only in Egypt and Tunisia but also in more distant parts of the world. It was a generational revolt against the older generations that managed to mess up matters until they reached such dismal levels. In line with that, it represents the beginnings of a break with the old ways of seeing and defining the world.

We have to admit that traditional science, especially social science, has played an important role in helping define the worldview against which this younger generation is revolting. Sure, there have always been branches of critical science providing alternative perspectives, but that was not the mainstream, it actually served more to validate dominant perspectives, and hence the validity of dominant political structures.

Let us admit that urban planning and design represented by the highly educated professionals working with the government on Cairo's (and Egypt's) past, present and future images, have actually contributed very effectively in creating the mess we are now seeking to escape. During the past 30 years people from these fields were active participants with many international cohorts in academic conferences and meetings debating and discussing that mess in its various forms and dimensions. Yet the mess still grew more and more complex! Putting blame aside, it is important to acknowledge that the end result is a dismal failure, not to the political structure alone, but also to the professional and academic ones as well.

Learning from Cairo should be focused on learning from the statement of rejection that was triggered in this place over two years ago, and recognizing it as a statement directed as much to the professional and academic communities as to the political structures.

I learned something from the experience of *Learning From Cairo*. I realized that our traditional overlays are worn out and we need to shed them for new ones.

Nabeel Elhady

"I have a simple suggestion. We should neither say 'informal' nor 'formal.' Actually, we should not say anything at all. I think labeling is a big problem. We should instead talk about a complex urban environment, since labeling always leads to more problems regardless of what the label is. Having mentioned the labeling problem, we should also acknowledge that the urban environment here is very complex. We can neither ignore informal areas featuring certain characteristics, nor ignore the rest of the city. There is also another bug problem facing us. As far as I know, all Egyptian universities do not acknowledge such complex environments, I mean neither their design studios nor planning studios acknowledge such; even though the latter may acknowledge it to some extent. Therefore, the inability to address the environment in its current complex form poses a great problem. There is a lack of a vision for addressing the complex urban environment. There is a severe lack of such vision in all academic institutions. So, if our academic institutions do not acknowledge the complexity of our urban environment, what are we supposed to do then? Are we supposed to find out about the areas in Cairo and other governorates after graduation?

Of course we have a great problem. So, how come universities do not acknowledge it as such? Why do they not see it as a main urban challenge? This should be reflected in our curriculum. Unfortunately, because we all find it easy to use the same old approach, we just keep using it and the efforts aiming at addressing complex areas in Cairo are only individual efforts. This has got to end. We have a real problem. I mean, yes we are trying, but these attempts must be significant and institutional. As long as these attempts are not institutional, we still have a big problem."

Khaled Abdelhalim

"Of course I want to comment on this formal/informal kind of definition, and what Nabil mentioned was very inspiring in terms of saying why name it at all, I totally agree that naming or labeling is very problematic, and it comes with conceptions, interpretations and so on. I also like very much what he said of let's move from describing the symptom to describing the causes. What is it in informality that is really not as good as elsewhere in the city? It is vulnerability, is it inequality? So this is very important that the issue comes forward, how to change these perceptions. I think this conference shows the importance of working on these tools of communication. Universities don't buy into this multi-disciplinary mode, seeing this urban environment as a complex and so on, but at least they are the closest to being convinced. Not only professors and the faculty, but also students and so on, and from there we need to see how to engage the government as well as the media."

Parallel Practice, Incremental Development

Mohamad Abotera and Ahmed Zaazaa, Madd Platform

• Planning in Cairo should be community-specific, with modes of cooperation as opposed to modes of imposition. Cities and their communities cannot be reduced to a two-dimensional map.

• Urban development in Cairo needs to align itself with current paradigm shifts from predictability to uncertainty, from linear to networked, and from equilibrium to non-equilibrium systems. This can be translated on the ground as a shift from centralized management to decentralized management; from revenue orientation to community orientation; from master plans to micro plans; from product orientation to process orientation; from unilateral decision making to participatory decision making; from control to facilitation; and finally from predetermination to flexibility.

• An acknowledgement of informal and extra-state practices is inevitable, necessary and possibly productive.

• The right to the city and the law of the city need to be reconciled.

• Architects have a responsibility to take a stand and rethink their role, not as representatives of the fortunate few, but rather as responsible members of the community, with the potential to effect change.

• The messy vitality of the urban condition arises from unpredictable exchanges between different stakeholders, classes, races, and social and cultural groups making their own places in the city. The spontaneous and flexible character of global cities is revealed to be both a means of survival and a form of personal and collective expression. But can these principles form a work plan and a framework for urban practitioners?

• The Revolution in Cairo has opened the door for alternative modes of practice, comprised of urban activists committed to working with local inhabitants to upgrade their communities. These are incremental and sometimes asynchronous, but effective. In order for such approaches to succeed, they must align with state and government frameworks, which require increased transparency and improved access to information.

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• The role of academia is central; not only to underpin the knowledge base and inform both the state- and community-orientated sides of the debate, but also to shift the mindset of future practitioners.

• The roles of NGOs and political parties are emerging as instrumental in influencing government policy.


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Reflections on *Learning from Cairo*

Mohamed Elshahed

The urban activist Omnia Khalil showed her film *Egyptian Urban Action* (2012) during the *Learning from Cairo* conference panel Security, Segregation, Borders. The film begins with Reda, a carpenter who lives in an area of Cairo known locally as *Koukha*, near Bab al-Wazir at the bottom of the Citadel. The area was damaged during the 1992 earthquake and the state has made it difficult for residents seeking to repair or upgrade their homes. As a result many homes have partially or fully collapsed, and families have continued to live in the remaining space, sometimes an entire family in one room. The poor physical state of the area, a direct result of state policy, was cited as reason for the removal of the entire area in a government plan. It aimed to create a 500meter buffer zone between the city's urban fabric and the Citadel. Such action would dislocate thousands of families, many of whom are economically valuable and depend on their social ties and their current access to services and work. Reda is not convinced by the plan and insists that while Cairo's urban problems have been accumulating for generations and are difficult to solve, the main struggle is against the bureaucracy. As a resident, Reda does not know who produced such a plan, which will fundamentally affect his life.

Reda runs a successful carpentry workshop in the area, and employs several men from the neighborhood. When Khalil interviewed Reda, he offered a pragmatic view of the situation and proposed policy solutions. His proposed solution combined design with finance and policy. He suggested that banks could allow residents to take a mortgage on the property to pay for its upgrading, while the bank, in cooperation with the municipality, could assign an architect to restore the neighborhood houses. Assuming that heritage is the state's main concern, the restoration would follow heritage-conscious guidelines. Reda asserted that government plans to relocate communities into far-flung locations would be at the expense of social ties. He claimed these communities would face financial burdens due to an increased need for transport, and would reject such compromised access to basic services such as affordable transport, health and education facilities. Residents will work with the state, Reda argued, but it must create space for dialogue and a process for getting things done. As a leader in his community, he has no meaningful avenues of participation in the governance that affects his daily life. Despite the pragmatism he offers and the resilience of his community, their collective action towards improving their own built environment is made impossible within the local administrative system.

This vignette offers insights into topics covered during the *Learning from Cairo* conference, posing questions regarding necessary policy change, the roles of civil society and NGOs, as well as the place of architects, artists and planners in Cairo's urban context. The film illustrated succinctly the urgent need to reconfigure a more participatory relationship between urban communities and the state that can potentially allow Reda to take active steps to improve his community and built environment under the tutelage of a government-supervised urban management plan. Where do architects with their current modes of operation fit within the realities faced by the many communities like his? And what tools of analysis, theories and concepts are available to help scholars understand the present conditions in Cairo? While some of these questions were presented throughout *Learning from Cairo*, whether in panel discussions, site visits or workshops, they remain unanswered. By the end of the conference there were no clear answers to respond to Reda's needs with designs or policies, but the various discussions helped identify the weaknesses of the current terminology and analytical tools utilized by scholars and architects to understand Cairo.

The conference succeeded in making visible questions and terms that merit serious investigation in the coming period. Informality emerged as a dominating topic, as it is perceived to represent the majority of Cairo's urban landscape. Yet the various discussions, particularly comments by Gautam Bhan, showcased the limitations of such a flattening term to describe the complexity of Cairo's informalities. Also, the question of architectural education at Egyptian institutions, including the American University in Cairo, recurred during various discussions. The current educational model does not train students to confront Cairo's urban and architectural realities nor does it engage with international academic discussions that may aid professionals in Cairo in better understanding their context. Another important area put into relief by the conference related to questions of public space and the right to the city. While previous conferences have touched upon these topics, *Learning from Cairo* succeeded in evolving the conversation beyond the typical

What I learned from Cairo is that the city is not merely another case study for the application of theories, tools and methods developed elsewhere in order to understand its urbanity. Cairo is in fact a laboratory of its own, worthy of professional and academic attention to generate new terms, new theories and concepts that may lead to productive responses to its urban conditions.

redundancies and uncritical mantras borrowed from elsewhere. The site visits grounded these topics and took the conversation outside the realm of the university and academia and into the streets.

What I learned from Cairo is that the city is not merely another case study for the application of theories, tools and methods developed elsewhere in order to understand its urbanity. Cairo is in fact a laboratory of its own, worthy of professional and academic attention to generate new terms, new theories and concepts that may lead to productive responses to its urban conditions. Too often has the conversation regarding Cairo's architecture and urbanism been trapped in North-South, East-West dualities, which has been time-consuming and of little help in deciphering the city's past and present, or imagining a better future for its inhabitants. *Learning from Cairo*'s success lies in the diversity of the topics presented, the on-site visits, and the invitation of international speakers to provide rare perspectives from other contexts little heard in Egypt. The conference would have benefited from additional time for discussion, and from the presence of political representatives from the state, political parties, as well as representatives from financial and banking institutions.

Reflections on a Tour of 6th of October New Desert City west of Cairo

Richard N. Tutwiler

Our tour began in the heart of Downtown Cairo and proceeded along the 26th of July corridor linking the capital to the new desert city of 6th of October. We passed through a series of urban zones and land use patterns, from the affluent Zamalek neighborhood on its island in the Nile, westwards through middle class Muhandisin, and several distinctly lower income and informal neighborhoods. We then emerged into a peri-urban zone of intensive vegetable and fruit production interspersed with weekend mansion retreats of the Cairo elite before climbing the abrupt slope that separates the verdant Nile valley from the sandy desert plateau. From here our experience of desert development around Cairo began. First we passed through the Abu Rawwash zone of factories and warehouses and crossed the linear development of shopping malls, automobile dealerships, and office parks along the Cairo-Alexandria Desert Highway that marks the city limits of 6th of October. The entire transitional zone between the valley and 6th of October is full of hustle and bustle and the movement of people and goods.

In contrast, when we entered 6th of October via al-Shaykh Zayid City, its annexed upscale neighborhoods, noise, dust, and traffic levels were dramatically reduced. We entered a green zone being developed by the 6th of October Development and Investment Company (SODIC), as a planned community offering its privileged residents a variety of amenities and lifestyle options. We visited Allegria, a gated neighborhood with its own golf course and country club. Adjacent to Allegria are an international school, two new boutique malls, and an office park meant to house some of Egypt's most prominent private companies. SODIC and its partner developers have included a range of housing options from villas with swimming pools to luxury apartments, each type segregated from the other within its own neighborhood.

Whether or not by design, segregation emerged during our tour as a theme underlying the development of 6th of October City. The al-Shaykh Zayid City areas are separated from the rest of 6th of October by distance and land use. At the end of an expanse of desert highway, the next zone after al-Shaykh Zayid City hosts a number of large commercial operations, most notably the immense Mall of Arabia with its surrounding car parks. This is followed by an institutional zone that includes the modern, private Dar al-Fouad Hospital and the Misr University for Science and Technology, another privately owned institution. Another five kilometers into the desert, we encountered what serves as the city's center. This area is laid out in a standard square grid and houses the municipal authority offices, two private universities, and the central mosque. There are shops on the ground floors of the apartment blocks making up the majority of buildings, and street vendors are prevalent. At the southwest end of the residential area, about five to six kilometers from the city center, is the low income housing area. Unlike many of the informal areas surrounding Downtown Cairo, this area was clearly developed according to a master plan and a unified design. Although the buildings are themselves of modest construction with concrete frames, brick filled walls and small and infrequent windows, there is a considerable amount of open space and even some small, park-like public areas. The principal crossroads also serve as informal market areas with numerous vendors and informal restaurants and cafés lining the pavements. All in all, these areas appear to be more pleasant places to live than the informal areas that predominately serve the low income population of greater Cairo. We visited in the afternoon, and the streets were relatively quiet. This may indicate that most people were at work or in school. In any case, the location suggests few passers-through in this area. The people one sees on the street most likely live in the neighborhood.

The final area we visited is the large industrial zone located to the southwest of the low income housing area. Similarly laid out as a squared grid, the industrial zone houses a variety of industries, from very large automobile assembly plants to small food processing factories. We were told that the level of business activities has declined sharply since the January 2011 Revolution, and that many factories have been converted to warehouses. Although it is evident that many establishments are still operating, there is also the feeling that the general level of activity in the industrial zone is not what it was previously.

As we drove back to Cairo past more scattered residential developments under construction to the south and east of 6th of October City, we reflected on what we had seen. Certainly, spatial separation of urban function and residential socioeconomic categories strikes even the most casual of visitors. Transportation, and more often the lack of it, is another theme that deserves consideration. Al-Shaykh Zayid City is built with the assumption that transport is by privately owned automobile. No public transport was evident during our visit, and many of the areas would be off limits to public access in any case. Although one assumes there is a public bus or taxi service to the Mall of Arabia and other large commercial hubs, none was obvious during our short visit. Public transport was quite apparent between the city center and the low income housing district. In fact, a large impromptu (in the sense that it had not been included in the original design of the street) microbus terminal is located at the intersection at which the main thoroughfare from the city center meets the beginning of the low income housing area. Interestingly, there was no apparent connection going in the opposite direction, towards the industrial zone where one would expect the residents of the low income housing to find employment. The microbuses are privately owned and operated and clearly serve routes where there is strong customer demand. They represent the most visible form of public transportation in 6th of October City.

What might our tour suggest to planners and policymakers concerned with the future growth and sustainability of 6th of October City? To encourage development of a coherent, interactive community, there needs to be greater effort at achieving some type of integration among the new city's currently very segregated residential, commercial, and institutional areas. Perhaps the best place to start is with a comprehensive and true public transport system that is affordable and serves the needs of all the residents of the city.

Recalibrating Norms

Mokena Makeka

Megacities are no longer the fictive dream of farsighted planners, they are present realities. These dream cities of the future are often envisioned through the prism of more efficient forms of intensified infrastructure, the premise being that as cities grow, so too does normative access to technology and resources. The truth is startlingly different. The megacity is not a guaranteed platform for access, but a gamble based on the hope of access ever being achieved, despite diminishing resources.

Cairo is one such place, where the symbols of a city have been superseded or at the very least retooled to present an unfamiliar and yet accepted picture of a city operating outside itself, at once embracing its gargantuan scale, and equally acting in denial of its instability and cultural contradictions.

This observation is borne of several days' acting out within the city, exploring an admittedly curated sliver of Cairo's complexity, which reveals the following contestable observations.

The *Learning from Cairo* conference revealed an interesting chasm between perceptions of formal planning and informality, regarding how the city is read and framed in relation to the character of the state and authority from a supra-national political perspective. In Southern Africa, and to an extent South America, informal development has the following attributes: poor to no access to formalized infrastructure planning and delivery; the absence of various state mechanisms to order development in terms of tax revenue and waste management; minimal investment in social infrastructure (including policing and cultural investment); and almost no formal business investment. Informal areas are largely residential dormitories and peripheral hinterlands for rich economic exchange. These informal settlements also exhibit a high degree of unstable land tenure, due to a lack of formal recognition by banking institutions; and low quality construction resulting from individual interventions in the built environment rather than collective planning and executive efforts.

The informal sector in Cairo, by contrast, is often enabled by an anticipatory planning grid, against which the formalization of infrastructure management can take hold. Building forms of medium to high density are produced as a result, of eight to nine stories in some instances. Multiple units are owned by absent informal landlords, who are entrepreneurially oriented and participate in the housing market from the perspective of speculation rather than survival. Furthermore, these areas are defined as informal by Cairenes, with an emphasis on class and not purely on living standards or the metrics of survival. This class distinction has an inexplicable undertone of moral weight; the formal world is typically seen as the world of disciplined citizenship and the denizens of informal areas are often viewed as a rogue class unto their own and perhaps deserving of their informal status. This moral shade to how the city is consumed, produced and understood sheds light and relief on the imaginary of the city as a site of struggle between order and disorder. In South Africa, on the other hand, the imaginary of the informal city is constructed around progression towards normative conditions for all citizens. In other words, informality and its close ally, poverty, are seen as consequences of the performance of the city as a whole, rather than as a cumulative result of particular types of immoral or delinquent, class-based behavior.

In Cairo, one constant lament was the lack of interest of current state institutions in providing an enabling order in the post-revolution clime. This encouraged a dialectic between a desire for robust state institutions versus robust civic culture. In short the desire for a strong and present state was palpable and came with varying degrees of disillusionment with the increasing Islamicization of the state apparatus, along with a persistent weariness with the ubiquitous and self-interested presence of the military complex in the everyday life of Cairenes. This vacuum of governance, and the romanticization of an omnipotent state continue, yet the question of how and by whom this omnipotence is represented is at the core of what I term "the two revolutions." The first being the visible revolution that was broadcast around the world; while the secondary revolution is an ongoing struggle for the narrative of "what Cairo and Egypt must be," from a religious, secular, insular, international, economic, gender and class contested terrain. This desire is not to be underestimated. Cairo has managed, through its own fine-grained ingenuity, as well as through long periods of state intervention in everyday life, to escape the near-terminal dysfunctionality and unplanned

overcrowding of many third world cities. And it has achieved this while reconciling the demands of vast numbers of people in a troubled geopolitical region. While recognising that Cairo is at once fragile and robust, it seems to me that the narrative of what democracy means for Cairenes is a fugue of broken sentences, red herrings, cul-de-sacs and fecund "Yellow Brick Roads" that can only be untangled through a reimagination of public space as a placemark for how the social imaginary can take hold and "dream itself into being." This second revolution is the one that interests me, insofar as it begins to provide a rudimentary framework for how resources are distributed at the city scale.

This desire for an omnipresent, capacitated, and active state was reflected by the critique that the state has unfortunately left the informal sector to its own devices. However, from the perspective of social innovation, it is a critical leap of self-motivated governance if informal patterns and transactions produce orders of a tolerable, productive and liveable magnitude. Indeed this allows for citizens to mobilize themselves and hold the state accountable through their own action and agency. In many parts of South Africa and South America, the informal sector has other less tangible but potent attributes: a broken sense of community and weak forms of local governance; lack of interest in self-motivated progression; and an overly dependent perspective on the role of the state in ordering everyday life. In the particular case of South Africa, I would argue that this is a qualitative threat to a robust democracy, if we define democracy as one in which citizenship is equated with participation in and ownership of one's own destiny, and with "having a stake in the state."

In a country of limited resources, this dependency places not only an unsustainable burden on a fragile economy, but furthermore produces a culture where service delivery is not normative for all citizens but assumes a tone of political exchange, patronage and allegiances – some overt, others clandestine. This diminishes democratic practice, especially when the participants are disproportionally matched in the exchange. The absence or retreat of the state from providing social order at all levels is perhaps a pragmatic approach for the management of the megacity, as I am of the humble opinion that at such scales of magnitude the megacity cannot be planned, tamed or framed within a unifying planning or empirical narrative. Megacities are hyper hives of human activity, the likes of which our species has not seen before, and have a multidimensional identity and logic that may be necessary for the megacity's survival.

This vacuum of governance, and the romanticization of an omnipotent state continue, yet the question of how and by whom this omnipotence is represented is at the core of what I term "the two revolutions." The first being the visible revolution that was broadcast around the world; while the secondary revolution is an ongoing struggle for the narrative of "what Cairo and Egypt must be," from a religious, secular, insular, international, economic, gender and class contested terrain.

As I see it, the role of the state in a post-revolutionary condition bears some similarities to South Africa in 1995, in that the nature of the democracy remains to this day a contested terrain of narratives to establish democratic norms – including how the rights to the city are allocated and defined. In the Western Cape of South Africa, the ruling party prides itself on its governance and legislative reach, and has articulated its legitimacy in terms of its ability to address service delivery challenges and be responsive to constituencies. Cape Town is a tertiary city in its national locale, has a low population density,

and is comparatively affluent. While its delivery challenges remain near mathematically impossible to reduce substantively for at least a generation, they pale in comparison to the empirical challenge of Cairo, where at least 20 million people reside. Cairo is a "mega-primate" city; just under one in four Egyptians are citizens of Cairo – with extensive and contingent implications for how state resources are allocated.

In short, South Africa suffers under the malaise of its stuttering relationship between citizen and state. While sporting various and laudable empirical attributes of democratic practice, its own democracy is denied by the incomplete nature of layered accountability and an inversion of servitude. Because citizens "wait for the delivery of services," the state retains its largesse as leverage, and citizens operate as if they serve the state and not the other way around. In Cairo, for its own reasons, the state's abdication from its responsibilities (with regard to policing, and so forth) is not framed as a genuine opportunity for civic reordering, and this to my mind is a missing perspective.

My final observation stems from the revelation that Cairo is technically informal in its own terms, since the majority of its population resides within these informal zones. If this is the case, as indeed David Sims so compellingly illustrated in his opening plenary presentation; and if Cairo is to embrace democracy, then informality is the new norm and the type of social infrastructure, civil service and planning stratagems required to unlock and serve the citizens of such a place requires a more profound reimagination of the role of the state in relation to its citizens. The architecture required to capture that *genius loci* is yet to emerge but its purpose is no less significant and important in determining what Cairo wants to look like, and how it wants to be. This is both an ontological and an aesthetic concern, and in the case of Cairo, a fascinating moral and ethical question.

Future Visions, Recommendations and Directions

Joseph Schechla

Cairo expands in a policy vacuum. The state and government carry out housing and infrastructure projects, but such projects do not constitute a comprehensive policy of supporting social production of the urban habitat[1] or regulating the housing market to ensure the provision of affordable housing for the most needy. An eventual policy has to ensure that the actual cost of adequate housing and basic services are not greater for the low-income segment of the population. Interventions have to be integrated across services to ensure free and informed participation and consent of affected communities. That requires effective political representation at the local level, which is particularly ambiguous in Cairo's transition period, and was corrupt and inefficient before 25th of January 2011.

As a constitutional principle, local councils should be comprised of directly elected members.

The public budget in general, as well as housing and local development budgets in particular, must be transparent, published and accessible to the average citizen. These criteria should exist across international cooperation resources available to public institutions, avoiding the current disproportionate favoritism toward the private sector and the obscene concentration of wealth, resources (e.g., land and water) and advantages to a handful of enterprises.

Obviously in the Egyptian context, law and policy that ban construction on agricultural land must be effectively enforced. Law, policy and budgets geared to support a built environment with the smallest environmental footprint on productive land, are vital to sustainability and food sovereignty. Among the urgent policy options required is a population strategy that incentivizes decreased population growth.

1. What are some the responsibilities of civil society, NGOs and local communities?

Within their respective specializations, civil society, NGOs and local communities bear responsibilities shared by all citizens. All share particular responsibilities to build the local, citywide and national culture and practice that demands, develops and maintains the governance with these remedial measures.

Executing this responsibility would confront the necessary challenge of cooperation and critical dialog with local, regional and national authorities to overcome the impasse in communication and lack of mutual trust.

2. How might we envision a new role for architects, planners, designers and artists?

Any public-sector professional working in the habitat sphere, in Cairo or elsewhere, bears a legal and moral duty to serve the public, prioritizing services for those in greatest need. Those individuals and their institutions have to operate on the premise that the inhabitants have the right to remain where they live and to be the first-line beneficiaries of development interventions. As civil servants, these professionals are to operate without authoritative and imperious attitudes toward the public, and should gain an appreciation for the rule of law, including human rights obligations that pertain to them and their professions.

In the formulation of the controversial *Cairo 2050* plan, access to information is opaque and difficult to access, and many plans are concealed from the affected local communities, while those very plans call for the affected communities' removal. Public and private architects, planners and designers must become accountable to the public, and must ensure that forced eviction victims must enjoy their rights to remedy and reparations.[2]

Despite local legislation,[3] international standards, including Egypt's treaty obligations, establish that those conducting forced evictions are to be prosecuted for "gross violations."

Socially oriented architects, planners, designers and artists have a remedial role to play to develop a culture for current and future generations of practitioners that respect human rights and development as a society.

3. In what ways can academia and centers of knowledge production contribute to or address the issues at hand?

Educators in these fields, as well as the fields of law and social sciences, have a remedial role to play in developing a culture for current and future generations of practitioners that introduces concepts of citizenship, human rights norms and social development as such. In order to achieve that, curricula should address the exaggerated stratification and individualism in the culture of the city, and pose practical alternatives.

Related to point 2, above, both the academy and civil society organizations need closer cooperation and complementarity. The multidisciplinary approaches in the academy and civil society encourage mutual learning and the breaking of unnecessary silos among disciplines. This collaboration would yield productive follow-up steps through more collaborative research, design, social production, policy analysis and reform, popular education and development interventions. All such steps would maximize benefits by involving local inhabitants as much as programmatically possible.

As demonstrated in the *Learning from Cairo* conference's extra-Egypt examples of theory and practice, these observations are universal and transferable across regions. As out of control as Cairo is, the underlying causes for its condition remain unique.

1: "Social production of habitat" is a process involving all nonmarket processes carried out under inhabitants' initiative, management and control that generate and/or improve adequate living spaces, housing and other elements of physical and social development, preferably without—and often despite—impediments posed by the state or other formal structure or authority. (For more information and cases, go to Habitat International Coalition (HIC) general website and HIC's Housing and Land Rights Network website.)

2: UN, 2006. *Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law A/RES/60/147* [online] available at: http://www.un.org/Docs/asp/ws.asp?m=A/RES/60/147. [Access date unknown]

3: e.g. Unified Building Law No.119 of 2008 and the Expropriation for the Public Interest Law No.10 of 1990)

Negotiations

Selva Gürdoğan and Gregers Tang Thomsen, Superpool

A thing learned in Cairo: the city vernacular speaks the language of concrete. Neighborhood craftsmen build concrete buildings averaging eight stories high. Structures whose simplicity and directness in the use of materials at hand would leave any high modernist envious, they make up the majority of Cairo's building landscape. Similar vast employment of available construction techniques and 'informal' developments must have been the basis of the growth of most major metropolitan areas. Classic descriptions of similar conditions could come out of Charles Dickens' Victorian London; that was a little over 150 years ago. Nevertheless, Cairo is testing a new density. There is a fine line between the need for shelter and housing, and future investment. This line has been crossed many times in Istanbul, our hometown, ironically always at the moment of democratic government elections; it makes one suspect that building a democracy and a city are the same thing. Though seen as a stable role model in the area, Istanbul belongs to a young nation that is rewriting its constitution for the eighth time since 1839, pointing to a volatile public space, where actors and rules are not completely set. This unresolved "social infrastructure" or "master plan," if you will, sets the tone for Istanbul's urbanization processes as well. Istanbul is Turkey's largest city, of roughly 15 million people, with a population density of 2,400 people per square kilometer – making it 26 times denser than the rest of the country's average of 92 people per square kilometer. The best opportunities in the country for education and employment are in Istanbul. The city produces 40 percent of all of Turkish tax revenue and only uses five percent of this income. Still, Istanbul continues to grow in population and in built area.

Today, like Cairo, 90 percent of Istanbul's neighborhoods are brand new, built only in the last 50 years through an urbanization process that can be described in three distinct phases. The first wave of migrants, unable to find adequate housing, built single story shacks, *gecekondu*, on the then empty outskirts of the city. Neighborhoods started clustering around kinship, and were typically named after the towns or villages left behind. The second phase of migration started in the 1980s as the government started legalizing the land ownership of the *gecekondu*, and more significantly, increasing the built area allowance on each plot to four stories instead of one. Small-scale contractors, *yapsatçı*, came into being. They transformed the *gecekondu* into four- (or more) story

There is a fine line between the need for shelter and housing, and future investment. This line has been crossed many times in Istanbul, our hometown, ironically always at the moment of democratic government elections; it makes one suspect that building a democracy and a city are the same thing.

buildings, giving two apartments to the *gecekondu* owners and selling the other two for profit. A massive re-building process happened with small-scale contractors who negotiated the rebuilding of each parcel. Though the process was completely reliant on public involvement, it lacked the intelligence of a civic actor who might produce and protect common resources, such as parks, kindergartens, libraries, sports halls or playgrounds. An obvious indicator of the absence of such an actor can be seen in the limited active green space available per person in the city; three m^2 per person is well below the World Health Organization's recommendation of a minimum of nine m^2 per person. Today, in the third phase of urbanization, *yapsatçı* neighborhoods are under redevelopment pressure due to earthquake risks and new market demands. It is understood that the future city should offer a better quality of life and have better social infrastructure. In this regard, civic authorities have charted new building codes specifying public amenities. However, although public spaces have been itemized as requirements, they have not yet become objects of desire. That is why it is not possible to make a long list of good examples of public buildings, like schools, kindergartens, libraries or public spaces like neighborhood parks, plazas or the like.

Soon in Cairo, the 'informal' will be formalized, most likely during the next democratic elections, and it should be. But what will the people demand of each other when they sit down to negotiate? Will the public representatives secure more than votes for the future city?

Learning from Cairo – Conclusion and Postscript

Scheduled two years after the 2011 Revolution, the *Learning from Cairo* conference intended to revisit Cairo's urban revolt and accompanied processes of urban change, situating the hopes, dreams and frustrations of Cairenes within an international context. The conference examined emerging local initiatives, manifestations of community empowerment, and an array of visions, charters and policy papers that had been percolating over the previous two years. *Learning from Cairo* was, thus, envisaged as a comparative framework, juxtaposing local examples and experiences with regional and international case studies.

The conference format brought together speakers, participants and audience members from different disciplinary and professional backgrounds, in order to contemplate critical urban questions from multiple vantage points. The speakers included architects, planners, historians, political scientists, economists, urban sociologists, and scholars of public policy. This mix of academics, professionals and policy makers, on the podium and the floor, generated heated discussions and challenged the dominance of a single narrative.

One of the major critiques raised during the closing session was a noticeable lack of participation by public servants and representatives of governmental institutions in the conference. While the organizers extended invitations to key officials in both governorates of Cairo and Giza, as well as to relevant national agencies, such as the General Organization for Physical Planning (GOPP), Informal Settlements Development Fund (ISDF), and National Organization for Urban Harmony (NOUH), some of these invitees expressed reservations about attending without being given the opportunity for formal speeches and presentations. Logistical and protocol procedures may have hindered the participation of others. For example, the fact that the main public session was held on a Friday morning – the beginning of the weekend when many Cairenes start their day late and attend to responsibilities after noon congregation prayer – rendered the possibility of some public servants' attendance less likely. Furthermore, the conference location at the American University in Cairo (AUC) Tahrir Campus during a time when Tahrir Square was occasionally flaring with confrontations may have also contributed to their absence. Despite this, it should be noted, all conference proceedings enjoyed a full house, with a broad spectrum of participants, including practitioners, academics, and students from a range of disciplines. Nevertheless, it is clear that the conference would have benefited from the participation and input of governmental representatives, particularly in the working sessions on the third day, where a more relaxed format was provided and opportunity offered for broader audience engagement. In retrospect, some may argue that conferences of such format may not be the best sites to engage civil servants, who would perhaps be better approached on their own turf, holding meetings or small workshops within each respective agency or institution.

Another major consideration for this conference was to capitalize on the energy and momentum of emerging local initiatives and alternative modes of practice in the past two years. At its inception, *Learning from Cairo* organizers invited key urban and architectural players in the "post-Revolution," who engage in what we have termed an "emerging urban practice" to serve as members of an Advisory Committee, and help shape the tone and structure of conference proceedings. Not only were the Advisory Committee members instrumental in identifying the themes, international case studies and guest speakers for the conference, but these individuals and their respective initiatives/organizations also took the lead in curating the urban tours, thus offering new perspective to spaces of contestation and negotiation in the city. As presenters, moderators or tour leaders, they helped frame the working sessions on day three, offering a counterpoint to international examples and grounding the discussion within local contexts and current practices. In short, the decision to invite a largely younger generation of progressive practitioners/activists – many of them still in experimental stages of their

practices – created an intellectual and political edge for both the tours and discussions, raising expectations for an emerging critical discourse and future actions.

Despite perceived security concerns and potential disruptions, the organizers chose to hold all sessions on the AUC's Tahrir Campus, Downtown, thus drawing both geographical and political relevance to the conference title and proceedings. The organization of urban tours on the second day intended not only to "familiarize" international guests with local contexts and Cairo's complex urban conditions, it also aimed at engaging a wider range of participants. Many tour participants, including local residents, may not have had the opportunity, for example, to visit areas of informal housing previously. Secondly, the tours were structured so that they covered three fundamental urban conditions of Cairo (the urban core, the informal belt, and desert developments), the itineraries of which focused on sites of urban politics of contestation. As such, the tours linked everyday practices – including those of street vendors, garbage collection and encroachment on public space – to systemic policies of housing and transportation, as well as to dysfunctional modes of urban governance on both municipal and national levels. Thus, the tours helped ground the discussion in the working sessions: situating abstract questions, such as right to the city and urban citizenship, in local contexts and everyday urban experience.

Despite attempts to avoid getting into semantic arguments, the conference discussion did not escape the dilemma of the question of definitions. Terms, such as informality, for example, were to resurface in almost every session, or Q&A, not only challenging a universal definition, but also often questioning the need for a definition in the first place. As Gautam Bhan put it eloquently in the closing session, "What would be more important is what [informality] describes rather than the way it is defined." Other terms and notions whose definitions were debated include "right to the city," "urban citizenship," and the distinction between informal housing, squatter settlements, deteriorated historic areas and slums.

One of the most debated issues during the closing session was the classic question: "What's next?" The conference's goal was twofold: engendering a critical and interdisciplinary urban discourse, while fostering the potential formulations of urban policies and design ideas. It is the very intention of this publication to document the presentations, discussions and dialogues; local examples and international case studies; as well as the reflections by speakers and participants as a launching pad for future initiatives by, and partnerships between, academics, practitioners and policy makers. The aim of this publication in part is to instigate more focused topical discussions and visions for Cairo, a city in transition, still ailing and vulnerable after two years of violence, and yet empowered by a social and political upheaval unmatched in its recent history. The publication, as the conference itself, appeals to emerging initiatives on the ground and new modes of practice still in a state of becoming.

Postscript

At the time of this publication's printing, events in Cairo have taken a critical and violent turn. Earlier concerns related to the contestation of public space and the dismembering of its streets during the past two years all seem mild compared to the recent confrontations and level of violence. Scenes of barricaded sit-ins, burning buildings, and street battles with live ammunition have been deeply inscribed in the collective Cairene consciousness and will redefine the future of the city for years to come.

Will Cairo manage to escape this spiral of violence? Will an increasingly polarized society and political discourse come to terms with the political and social reality of necessary reconciliation? Will a city of contested narratives and increasingly entrenched positions, whose divided geography is further dissected by marches, protests, sit-ins and security checkpoints, survive the specter of civil war? Can Cairo offer a creative model out of this seeming deadlock? Before January 2011, many had lost hope in the possibility of social mobilization on such a scale and of imagining ways out of the political stagnation of the previous half century. The events of the 2011 Revolution's 18 days surprised locals and observers alike, as Cairo managed to break through conventional narratives of social struggle and political reform, carving out its own mode of urban revolution. Can Cairo undertake such a transformation again? We still look to Cairo for inspiration, to learn from its failures as much as its successes.

4/ Participants and Contributors


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Khaled Abdel Halim

Khaled Abdel Halim graduated as an architect/planner from Cairo University in 1990, received an M.A. in Architecture and Housing Studies from the University of Newcastle, UK in 1995, and Ph.D. in Housing Policy, Planning and Practice from the University of Central England in Birmingham, UK in 2003. He worked for more than six years for the German International Cooperation (GIZ-Egypt) in participatory upgrading of informal areas and has also acted as consultant and report ontributor to UNHabitat on strategic district and governorate planning in Egypt. Dr. Abdel Halim is a lecturer at the Department of Architecture at Helwan University and currently Visiting Assistant Professor of Urban Policy at the Amercian University in Cairo. Dr. Abdel Halim has been executive director of the Local Development Observatory at the Local Administration Reform Unit, a UNDP program which measures good governance and local development. He is a founding member of the Egyptian Earth Construction Association and TAKAMOL Foundation for Integrated Development.

Amr Abdel Kawi

Amr Abdel Kawi has completed his education in architecture in the United States and practiced architectural design in Egypt for over twenty years through his architectural practice Praxis. He eventually diversified his practice to include interior design and furniture design. Abdel Kawi has published a periodical on architecture, interior design and fine arts titled Medina between 1997 and 2002. Abdel Kawi has been an educator since 1981 at schools of architecture at Ain Shams University, Arab Academy of Science and Technology in Cairo, and the American University in Cairo. In 2008, Abdel Kawi consolidated these diverse activities under a new design management company called Rhimal, which focuses on promoting the fields of design through a stronger link with design-based industries. He resumed his publishing activities in 2008 through *Magaz*, a design magazine focused on promoting design thinking as a means towards international competitiveness.

Mohamad Abotera

Mohamad Abotera was trained as an architect in Egypt and obtained his M.A. degree from the University of Westminster in Architecture, Globalization and Cultural Identity. He worked as an architect in Egypt and the UK and has shifted into a more academic career, working as a teacher and a teaching assistant. Recently, he co-founded Madd Platform, an open urban hub working on connecting urban initiatives to expertise. In his work and research, Abotera focuses on the political attributes of space, accidental emergencies and accumulative interventions in the city by various actors.

May Al-Ibrashy

May Al-Ibrashy is an architect with twenty-one years of field experience in implementation of conservation projects in Islamic Cairo. She was previously a founding partner in Hampikian-Ibrashy, a Cairo-based conservation architecture firm with a five-year portfolio in conservation, documentation, consultation, training and research. Al-Ibrashy holds post-graduate and doctoral degrees in architectural history, archaeology and urban history from the University of London. Currently she is founder and chair of the Built Environment Collective, an Egyptian NGO working on issues of the built environment operating through its architectural hub and workspace Megawra. She is also Adjunct Lecturer of Architecture at the American University in Cairo and Ain Shams University.

Lara Baladi

Lara Baladi was born in Beirut, raised in Cairo and Paris, and educated in London. She has lived in Egypt since 1997. Baladi publishes and exhibits worldwide. Her body of work encompasses photography, video, visual montages/collages, installations, architectural constructions, tapestries and even perfume. Baladi received a Japan Foundation Fellowship in 2003 to research manga and anime in Tokyo. Among other global locations, she participated in the VASL residency program in Karachi, Pakistan in 2010. The breadth and variety of Baladi's international experience influences her use of iconography drawn from numerous cultures. *Borg el Amal* (*Tower of Hope*), an ephemeral construction and sound installation, won the Grand Nile Award at the 2008/2009 Cairo Biennale. The *Donkey Symphony*, *Borg el Amal*'s sound component, was performed by the Kiev Kamera Orchestra at the first Kiev Biennial in 2012. During the 2011 Egyptian uprising, Baladi co-founded two media initiatives: Radio Tahrir and Tahrir Cinema. Both projects were inspired and informed by the 18 days that toppled Mubarak's leadership. Tahrir Cinema served as a public platform to build and share a video archive on and for the revolution. Baladi is a member of the Arab Image Foundation since its creation in 1997. She curated the artist residency Fenenin el Rehal (Nomadic Artists) in the Libyan Desert in 2006 and participated in workshops and conferences around the world. Baladi is represented by the Townhouse Gallery in Cairo and IVDE Gallery in Dubai.

Gautam Bhan

Gautam Bhan is a Senior Consultant for Curriculum Development and Policy and Advisory Services at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements. Gautam's research and writing has focused on the politics of poverty in Indian cities, evictions and resettlement in Delhi. He is the co-author of *Swept off the Map: Surviving Eviction and Resettlement in Delhi* (Yoda Press: 2006) as well as several journal articles, including *This is not the City I once Knew: Evictions, the urban poor, and the right to the city in millennial Delhi* (Environment & Urbanization). He is an active part of urban social movements as well as a frequent columnist and writer in diverse media.

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Jennifer Bremer is an Associate Professor of Public Policy and Chair of the Public Policy and Administration Department, the first public policy department in the Middle East and one of three academic departments making up the new School of Public Affairs at the American University in Cairo. Her work focuses on corporate social responsibility, international trade, investment and development and strategies to bring private sector resources to bear on development challenges. Prior to joining AUC, she served for 16 years as director of the Washington Center of the Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise, a unit of the University of North Carolina business school. She holds a PhD (1982) and MPP (1975) from Harvard's Kennedy School, an M.A.

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Nabeel Elhady

Nabeel Elhady is an architect and professor at Cairo University. He initiated and organized for five years the annual architectural students' competition. Besides his academic responsibilities he is a practicing architect through his private practice Noon since 1998. Through the projects undertaken by his office, continuous attempts are made to blend theories with realities to bring about architecture that respects humanity and nature.

Aida Elkashef

Aida Elkashef graduated from the High Cinema Institute class of 2009 and has worked as an assistant director since her enrollment in the Institute. She directed local and international awards. Elkashef worked as video campaigner in several political campaigns such as No to Military Trials and Operation Anti-Sexual Assault.

Mohamed Elshahed

Mohamed Elshahed is a doctoral candidate in the Middle East and Islamic Studies Department at New York University. He lives in Cairo, where he is conducting dissertation research on architecture and urban planning in Egypt from 1939 to 1965, with an emphasis on the Nasser era. His dissertation examines popular discourse on the architectural transformation from anticolonial nationalism to postcolonial developmentalism in Egypt. Elshahed has a Bachelor of Architecture from the New Jersey Institute of Technology and a Master in Architecture Studies from Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He currently blogs at Cairobserver.

Heba Raouf Ezzat

Heba Raouf Ezzat has taught political theory at Cairo University since 1987 and at the American University in Cairo since 2006. She has been Visiting Researcher at the Centre for the Study of Democracy (CSD), University of Westminster (1995-6) and Associate Researcher at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies (1998). She is widely published and her publications in Arabic include: *Women and Politics: An Islamic Perspective* (Washington DC: IIIT, 1995) and *The Political Imagination of Islamists: A Conceptual Analysis in Islamists and Democrats* (Al-Ahram Center for Strategic Studies, 2004). She edited the two volumes of *Egyptian Citizenship* published by the Centre for Political Research and Studies-Cairo University, as well as *Globalization: New Visions for a Changing World* (Department of Political Science, Cairo University, 2002).

Khaled Fahmy

Khaled Fahmy is Professor in and Chair of AUC's Department of History. After graduating from AUC with a B.A. in Economics and a M.A. in Political Science, Fahmy pursued a DPhil from Oxford University. A renowned expert in Middle East studies, Fahmy served as Associate Professor of Middle Eastern and Islamic studies at New York University (NYU) before joining AUC as a faculty member. A prolific writer, Fahmy authored several publications including *Mehmed Ali: From Ottoman Governor to Ruler of Egypt* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2009); *All the Pasha's Men: Mehmed Ali Pasha, His Army and the Founding of Modern Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); and *The Body and Modernity: Essays in the History of Medicine and Law in Modern Egypt* (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub, 2004).

Kareem Ibrahim

Kareem Ibrahim is an architect, planner, and graduated from Cairo University in 1995. In 1997, he worked on the UNDP's Historic Cairo Rehabilitation Project. He has also worked for Aga Khan Cultural Services – Egypt between 1997 and 2010 as the Built Environment Coordinator of the Darb al-Ahmar Revitalization Project, one of Cairo's most ambitious urban revitalization programs. In 2009, he co-founded Takween Integrated Community Development and has been working on a range of issues including sustainable architecture, participatory planning, affordable housing, public infrastructure, and urban revitalization throughout Egypt with a number of local and international organizations.

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Omnia Khalil

Omnia Khalil is an architect, researcher and M.A. student in the anthropology/sociology program at AUC. Her graduate thesis in the Department of Architecture in Cairo University focused on the Tanneries Quarter of Old Cairo and was featured at the 2006 Venice Architecture Biennale and awarded by the WA World Architecture Community. Khalil is interested in community urban action planning. She joined Tarek Waly Center in 2009, heading the Memphis World Heritage Site Plan. In October 2010 she released a 10-minute documentary *Architecture Without Architects* expressing the perception of Cairo's residents toward beauty in architecture and buildings. In July 2012, she released her first exhibition *Egyptian Urban Action* which included a 25-minute short documentary on urban deteriorated areas and their residents' status against governmental policies in formal/informal neighborhoods.

Mokena Makeka

Mokena Makeka is principal and founder of Makeka Design Lab. His highlight was being selected among 100 architects globally by Herzog and de Meuron to be a part of the Ordos 100. He is a two-time recipient of the CIA Award of Merit and a 2010 nominee for the Johnnie Walker Celebrating Strides Awards in Design. He sits on the World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council for Design, is an external examiner at the Columbia

University Graduate School of Architecture, Preservation and Planning (GSAPP) and lectures at the University of Cape Town. Makeka's vision is to create a sound African aesthetic that serves the public and client, bringing dignity and grace to the built environment.

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Samia Mehrez is Professor of Arabic Literature and Director of the Center for Translation Studies at the American University in Cairo. She has published widely in the fields of modern Arabic literature, postcolonial studies, translation studies, gender studies and cultural studies. She is the author of *Egyptian Writers between History and Fiction: Essays on Naguib Mahfouz, Sonallah Ibrahim and Gamal al-Ghitani*, AUC Press, 1994 and 2005 and *Egypt's Culture Wars: Politics and Practice*, Routledge 2008, AUC Press 2010. Her edited anthologies *A Literary Atlas of Cairo: One Hundred Years in the Life of the City* and *The Literary Life of Cairo: One Hundred Years in the Heart of the City*, in which she translated the works of numerous Egyptian writers, are published by AUC Press (2010, 2011) and in Arabic by Dar Al-Shorouk, Cairo. She is the editor of *Translating Egypt's Revolution: The Language of Tahrir*, AUC Press (2012). She is currently working on a translation from Arabic into English of Mona Prince's memoir, *Ismi Thawra* (*Revolution is My Name*), forthcoming in 2013, and a book-length manuscript tentatively titled *The Making of Revolutionary Culture in Egypt*.

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Magda Mostafa, Ph.D. is currently an Associate Professor of Architecture at the American University in Cairo. Her research interests include Architectural Education and Special Needs Design- particularly design for autism, for which she has recently developed the *Autism ASPECTSS Design Index*™. She has received various awards including the International Award for Excellence in the Design Field in 2008 and was shortlisted for the same award in 2012, as well as nominated for the 2005 UNESCO Prize for Research and Training in Special Needs Education for Children. She is an active member of the UNESCO-International Union of Architects (UIA) Validation Council and Architectural Education Commission, where she currently serves as Deputy Regional Vice President for Region V and Co-Director of the Draft Panel on Academic & Professional Integrity and Plagiarism in Architectural Education and Professional Practice.

Omar Nagati

Omar Nagati is a Ph.D. candidate and practicing architect/urban planner living in Cairo. A graduate of Cairo University, he studied and taught at the University of British Columbia and University of California Berkeley, with a special focus on informal urbanism. Nagati adopts an interdisciplinary approach to questions of urban history and design and engages in a comparative analysis of urbanization processes in developing countries. He teaches Urban Design Studio at the Modern Sciences and Arts University in Giza and he is a part-time instructor at Cairo University. Nagati has recently co-founded CLUSTER, a new platform for art, urban research and design initiatives in Downtown Cairo.

Damon Rich

Damon Rich is a designer and artist, and currently serves as Chief Urban Designer for the City of Newark, New Jersey. In Newark, Damon leads design efforts with public and private actors to improve the city's public spaces, including launching the Newark Public Art Program, rewriting the city's zoning laws for the first time in 50 years, and overseeing the design of the city's first riverfront parks. In his exhibitions, graphic works, and events, sometimes produced in collaboration with young people and community-based organizations, Rich creates fantastical spaces for imagining the physical and social transformation of the world. His work represented the United States at the 2008 Venice Architecture Biennale, and has been exhibited at PS 1 Contemporary Art Center, Storefront for Art and Architecture, the Canadian Centre for Architecture, and the Netherlands Architecture Institute. In 1997, he founded the Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP) a nonprofit that uses design and art to improve civic engagement, and was Executive Director for 10 years. Damon has taught architecture and planning courses at the Cooper Union, Syracuse University, Pratt Institute, and the Parsons School of Design, and has written about architecture and politics for publications including *Perspecta*, *The Nation*, *Domus*, and *Architecture*.

Joseph Schechla

Joseph Schechla has focused much of his research and field experience on popular movements and legal defense of economic, social and cultural rights within the UN Human Rights System. His articles and books have dealt with the human rights solutions to problems related to adequate housing and land, related forms of institutionalized discrimination, population transfer, and rights-based remedies for indigenous peoples and peoples under occupation. Having previously served as program coordinator with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (Gaza, Palestine) and OHCHR representative in Tunisia (2011, 2012), and director of democratic development (AMIDEAST, Washington DC), since 2000, Joseph Schechla has been Cairo-based coordinator of the Housing and Land Rights Network (HLRN) of the Habitat International Coalition (HIC), an umbrella organization linking some 450 member organizations in over 100 countries promoting the human right to adequate housing.

Yahia Shawkat

Yahia Shawkat is a built environment researcher and critiques built environment policy on his blog, Shadow Ministry of Housing. The Right to Housing Initiative, which identifies a greater right to housing that encompasses other rights like land, water and energy and aims to map social justice in the built environment on a national level, involves the production of a series of short documentaries in addition to a guide for civil society, activists and students. Shawkat is also a housing and land rights researcher with the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights and has taught part-time at AUC. In 2008, he curated the Egyptian Pavilion at the 11th Venice Architecture Biennale. Shawkat holds a B.Sc. in Architecture from Cairo University.

Lindsey Sherman

Lindsey Sherman received her Master of Architecture from Columbia University, GSAPP and her Bachelor of Arts in Architecture and Business Administration from the University of California, Berkeley. Currently, she is a Project Architect at the interdisciplinary design practice Urban-Think Tank. At U-TT she leads several design projects, exhibitions, and research initiatives focusing

on architecture, urban design, and mobility across South America, Europe, and Asia. In addition, Sherman has also worked in architecture offices in Los Angeles, New York City, and Caracas.

Dina K. Shehayeb

Dina K. Shehayeb is the principal of her private consultancy firm Shehayeb CONSULT as well as a professor at the Housing and Building National Research Centre (HBRC) in Cairo, Egypt. Graduated as an architect in 1984, she focused her post-graduate degrees on Environment – Behavior Relations in Architecture, Urban Design and Planning. With a specialty in trans-disciplinary research and practice, she works on bridging the gap between the physical environment and its socio-economic, cultural and psychological dimensions. Her practice offers expertise on culturally appropriate built environments and effective housing policies, community-based neighborhood upgrading and planning, conservation and revitalization of "living heritage" patterns. Shehayeb CONSULT has recently focused on research utilization in practice and policy making through the development of more usable tools and design guidelines. Shehayeb has conducted and trained in participatory design and action planning both nationally and internationally. She is a member of several committees and working groups both national and international institutions and has more than 30 publications in scientific journals, conference proceedings and international reports and books.

David Sims

David Sims is an American economist and urban planner who has led a number of studies about Cairo's urban development and housing. He is the author of *Understanding Cairo: The Logic of a City Out of Control*.

Diane Singerman

Diane Singerman is an Associate Professor at American University, Washington D.C. She is a comparativist whose research interests focus on political change from below, particularly in the Middle East, and more specifically Egypt. Her work examines the formal and informal side of politics, gender, social movements, globalization, public space, protest, and urban politics. Her most recent edited books are *Cairo Contested: Governance, Urban Space, and Global Modernity*, and *Cairo Cosmopolitan: Politics, Culture, and Urban Space in the New Globalized Middle East*. Singerman is also the Co-Director and Co-Founder of Middle East Studies at American University.

Beth Stryker

Beth Stryker works between NYC and the Middle East and has recently curated exhibitions and programs for the Beirut Art Center, the AIA/Center for Architecture in NYC (where she held the position of Director of Programs), and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago. Her artworks have been exhibited widely including shows at the Wexner Center for the Arts, the Walker Art Center, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. Stryker received her B.A. from Columbia University, and her M.Arch. from Princeton University. She recently cofounded CLUSTER, a new platform for art, urban research and design initiatives in Downtown Cairo.

Superpool

Superpool: **Selva Gürdoğan**, Architect (born 1979, Turkey. 2003 graduate from Sci-Arc, USA) and **Gregers Tang Thomsen**, Architect (born 1974, Denmark. 2003 graduate from Aarhus School of Architecture, Denmark) founded Superpool in Istanbul in 2006. They met at Rem Koolhaas' studio Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) in 2003, where they worked until establishing Superpool. Currently, Superpool is engaged in TailorCrete, a European Commission-funded research project on incorporating robotics into concrete construction technology, along with the design of single-family houses in Zekeriyakoy, Istanbul. Superpool has also recently completed *Mapping Istanbul*, a book commissioned by Garanti Gallery with nearly a hundred maps and information graphics creating a valuable resource for architects, planners, and policy-makers invested in the city's future. Superpool is a recent contributor to the Audi Urban Future Award 2012 to research mobility in Istanbul in 2030.

Richard N. Tutwiler

Richard N. Tutwiler is a research director specializing in rural development and natural resource management in the Middle East and North Africa. He has been Research Professor and Director of AUC's Desert Development Center since 2001. Author of numerous publications on sustainable development, Tutwiler was a co-winner of the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research Chairman's Award for Outstanding Scientific Article in 2000. His current research activities include desert development in Egypt and water management in the Nile Basin. Tutwiler earned his B.A. in Cultural Anthropology from Macalester College and his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the State University of New York at Binghamton, where he also earned graduate diplomas in Middle East Studies. Tutwiler received The President's Distinguished Service Award of the American University in Cairo in 2008

Ahmed Zaazaa

Ahmed Zaazaa is an architect, urban designer and researcher, and he focused on informal territorial claims in public space and housing for his master's thesis. He is particularly interested in working with local initiatives on participatory design in low-income areas. Zaazaa is a co-founder of Madd Platform, an urban hub that communicates with the public through local initiatives and connects ideas and proposals to willing expertise. Madd supports initiatives with shared skills and participatory principles to form a pool which feeds ground actions. Madd Platform is responsible for Al-Kum al-Ahmar Village Development Project and is currently working on the Mit 'Uqba Development Project. Upcoming projects include 'Izbit Awlad Allam Village Development Project. Zaazaa is also an instructor at the American University in Cairo and the Department of Architecture at Arab Academy for Science, Technology, and Maritime Transport.

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بالإضافة إلى ذلك إثير الجدل حول مصطلحات وتعريفات أخرى مثل "الحق في المدينة" و"المواطنة العمرانية" وكذا التمييز ما بين تصنيفات مثل "الإسكان غير الرسمي" و"مستقرات واضعي اليد" و"المناطق التاريخية المتداعية".

ماذا بعد؟ مؤتمرات، ومشروعات، وعمل مشترك تمحورت إحدى القضايا الأساسية في الجلسة الختامية حول السؤال الكلاسيكي" ماذا بعد؟"، حيث سعى المؤتمر منذ البداية إلى هدفين أساسين: المساهمة في إثراء خطاب عمراني نقدي متعدد التخصصات من جهة، والمشاركة في تطوير أطر لسياسات عمرانية وأفكار تخطيطية من جهة أخرى. وتهدف هذه المطبوعة بصفة أساسية إلى توثيق العروض والمناقشات التي تمت، والأمثلة المحلية وأخرى على المستوى الدولي، بالإضافة إلى التأملات والنقد الذي طرحه المتحدثون والمشاركين، لتكوّن جميعا ركيزة لانطلاق مبادرات مستقبلية وشراكات بين أكاديميين ومهنيين ومتخذي القرار. ويأمل محرري هذه المطبوعة أن تقوم بالمساهمة في بلورة أطر ممتدة للحوار تركز على قضايا محددة ورؤى للمدينة في حالة انتقالية، حيث مازالت تعاني من تداعيات عامين من العنف والمواجهات بينما تتجلى فيها حركات اجتماعية في حالة تمكيين واستقواء غير مسبوقة في تاريخها الحديث. تتطلع هذه المطبوعة، مثلها مثل المؤتمر نفسه، إلى التواصل مع المبادرات المحلية الناشئة على الأرض وإلى تفعيل أنماط جديدة من الممارسة العمرانية مازالت في حالة تشكيل.

خاتمة: في الوقت الذي تصدر فيه هذه المطبوعة، أخذت الأحداث في القاهرة منحاً حرجاً مشوبا بالعنف غير المسبوق. وبالنسبة لمراقب محايد تضع هذه الأحدا ث في صيف ٢٠١٣ كل ما مرت به شوارع القاهرة من تعديات على الفراغ العام ومظاهرات ومسيرات ضد السُلطة في العامين السابقين في سياق هامشي بالنسبة لحجم ونوعية العنف الحالي. فمشاهد التحصينات والحواجز وإضرام النار في المباني ومعارك الشوارع بالذخيرة الحية قد تركت جرحا عميقا في الذاكرة الجمعية للقاهرة والتي ستعيد حتما صياغة مستقبل المدينة في السنوات القادمة.

أتستطيع القاهرة أن تتجاوز دوامة العنف الحالي؟ متى يمكن لحالة الاستقطاب السياسي والاجتماعي أن تجتمع على رؤية تصالحية حتمية لأي مستقبل ديمقراطي يستوعب الجميع؟ هل تفيق المدينة مرة أخرى من شبح الحرب الأهلية في خضم خطاب تصادمي وتخندق سياسي وإستقطاب أيديولوجي، وفي سياق جغرافيا منقسمة ومدينة مبتورة الأوصال؟ وأخيراً كيف يمكن للقاهرة أن تقدم نموذجاً مبدعاً للإلتفاف حول هذا الجدار السياسي والخروج من النفق الإقصائي المظلم؟ قبل يناير ٢٠١١ فقد الكثير الأمل في إمكانية حدوث حراكاً إجتماعياً بهذا الحجم وكذا في تصور رؤية متماسكة للخلاص والخروج من الركود السياسي الذي ساد منذ منتصف القرن الماضي. لقد فجأت القاهرة حينئذ كلاّ من المراقبين والمواطنين سواء، حيث استطاعت بتفرد شديد أن تفتح افقاً جديداً يتجاوز الأطر التقليدية للحراك الاجتماعي والإصلاح السياسي، لتتمخض نموذجاً فريداً للثورة العمرانية. فهل تستطيع تلك المدينة العتيدة أن تقوم مرة أخرى لتكسر القوالب النمطية العنيدة؟ لا زلنا نتطلع للقاهرة كمصدر للإلهام ولنتعلم منها دروسا عمرانية – ناجحة تارة أو متعثرة – ولكن بصدق في العزيمة وزخم غير مسبوق.

تعتبر هذه المطبوعة أحدى المخرجات الأساسية لمؤتمر «دروس من القاهرة» مصاحبةً لموقع إلكتروني www.learningfromcairo.org يضم توثيق فيديو شامل للمؤتمر وجلساته.

وطرح رؤى مستقبلية حيث تم دعوة الجميع للمشاركة. وقد وجهت الدعوة إلى العديد من الجهات والمنظمات والأفراد بحيث يضمن المؤتمر تمثيلا جيدا من الأكاديميين والباحثين والممارسين والطلبة بالإضافة إلى ممثلي الجهات الحكومية ولمؤسسات الدولية ومنظمات المجتمع المدني والجمعيات الاهلية والمحليات.

التوقيت: عقد مؤتمر "دروس من القاهرة" بعد عامين من اندلاع ثورة ٢٥ يناير ٢٠١١، حيث سعى لدراسة وتأمل هذا الحدث العمراني وما صاحبه من تحولات اجتماعية وسياسية من أمال، وطموحات، وكذا إحباطات قاطني المدينة، ليرصد هذه التحولات في سياق دولي مقارن. كما هدف المؤتمر إلى تفعيل المبادرات المحلية المنبثقة والناشئة وكذا تجليات التمكين والاستقواء للمجتمعات المحلية وما تتضمنه من رؤى تنموية ومواثيق عمرانية وأوراق سياسات تم صياغاتها في العامين السابقين. وعليه تبلورت رؤية مؤتمر "دروس من القاهرة" كإطار مقارن تتقابل فيه التجارب المحلية والآنية مع مثيلتها الإقليمية والعالمية.

تعددية التخصصات: تشكلت بنية المؤتمر لتجمع متحدثين ومشاركين وجمهورا من خلفيات وتخصصات مختلفة مما ساهم في طرح قضايا عمرانية نقدية من وجهات نظر متعددة. وقد ضمت منصة المتحدثين معماريين ومخططين ومؤرخين وأساتذة علوم سياسية واقتصاد وكذا متخصصين في العمران الاجتماعي والسياسات العامة، بالإضافة إلى فنانين بصريين ونشطاء في مجال حقوق السكن والفراغ العام. قد أثار هذا التنوع بين الأكاديميين والمهنيين وصانعي القرار على المنصة من جهة وبين الجمهور من جهة أخرى، مناقشات حادة وثرية ضمنت عدم إحتكار خطاب أحادي حاكم وسيطرة سردية منفردة.

المشاركون والتمثيل الحكومي: تم توجيه نقد أساسي أثناء الجلسة الختامية للغياب الملحوظ للمسئولين وممثلي المؤسسات الحكومية المعنية. وبينما وجه منظمي المؤتمر الدعوة إلى الجهات الأساسية في كل من محافظتي القاهرة والجيزة بالإضافة إلى الهيئات القومية المعنية مثل الهيئة العامة للتخطيط العمراني، وصندوق تنمية المناطق العشوائية، وجهاز التنسيق الحضاري، فقد أبدى بعض هذه الجهات تحفظا على حضورهم كمشاركين إذا لم تتح لهم الفرصة كمتحدثين على المنصة. كما يمكن أن تكون قد ساهمت بعض الاعتبارات اللوجستية والبروتوكولية في تقليل مشاركة البعض الأخر، مثل توقيت الجلسة الافتتاحية صباح يوم الجمعة، الذي قلل من إمكانية حضور الكثير من المسئولين الحكوميين، بالإضافة إلى موقع انعقاد المؤتمر في مقر الجامعة الأمريكية في ميدان التحرير، في وقت لم يزل الميدان يعج بالمناوشات والمواجهات، الذي ربما قد ساهم في غياب البعض الأخر، مع العلم أن جلسات المؤتمر شهدت حضوراً مكتملاً بشكل عام. وعلى كل حال فمن الجلي أن المؤتمر كان يمكن أن يستفيد بمشاركة ومداخلات ممثلي الهيئات الحكومية وخاصة في جلسات العمل المغلقة في اليوم الثالث حيث كان الإطار العام أكثر رحابة مما أعطى المشاركين من الجمهور فرصة أكبر للتفاعل. وبنظرة عامة، يمكن للبعض أن يتساءل عن جدوى البنية العامة لهذا المؤتمر كأفضل الأطر للتفاعل مع المسئولين الحكوميين حيث إقترح البعض أن يتم ذلك باجتماعات مباشرة أو ورش عمل صغيرة داخل مقرات الهيئات والمؤسسات كوعاء بديل للعمل التشاركي.

ممارسات مهنية ناشئة: إرتكزت إحدى الإعتبارات الأساسية لهذا المؤتمر على الإستفادة من الطاقة والزخم المتمثل في مبادرات محلية ناشئة وممارسات مهنية بديلة في العامين السابقين. ومع بزوغ فكرة مؤتمر "دروس من القاهرة"، دعا منظميه لاعبين أساسين في مجال العمارة والعمران في مرحلة ما بعد الثورة، كفاعلين ومشاركين فيما اصطلح عليه "ممارسات عمرانية ناشئة"، ليكونوا أعضاءاً في لجنة الإشراف وليساهموا في صياغة شكل ومحتوى فاعليات المؤتمر. ولم يقتصر دور أعضاء لجنة الإشراف على الإشتراك في إختيار وتعريف موضوعات الجلسات والأمثلة الدولية والعالمية والمتحدثين الدوليين فحسب، ولكن قام هؤلاء الأفراد ومنظماتهم بدور ريادي في الجولات الميدانية العمرانية وتقديم قراءة جديدة لفراغات النزاع والتفاوض في المدينة. وهكذا ساهم هؤلاء الرواد كمتحدثين ومحاورين أو منظمين للجولات العمرانية، في تطوير إطار نقدي للجلسات المغلقة ليطرحوا أمثلة مقابلة للتجارب الدولية في سياق محلي ومن خلال ممارسات على الأرض. وبإختصار ساهم اختيار ودعوة جيل جديد من الممارسين / النشطاء ذوي الرؤية التقدمية -الكثير منهم مازالوا في مرحلة تجريب- في بلورة أطر سياسية ونظرية واعدة لكل من الجولات الميدانية والمناقشات التالية والتي تستشرف بدورها خطاباً عمرانياً نقدياً وتتطلع إلى صياغة بديلة للممارسة العمرانية في المستقبل.

مقر الانعقاد والجولات العمرانية بالرغم من الاعتبارات الأمنية وإحتمالات التعطيل التي أشار إليها البعض فقد أصر المنظمون على أن يقام هذا المؤتمر في مقر الجامعة الأمريكية بالتحرير بوسط المدينة، بما له من دلالة جغرافية وسياسية ذات صلة بعنوان المؤتمر وجلساته. وقد سعت الجولات العمرانية في اليوم التالي إلى "تعريف" المتحدثين الدوليين بالسياق المحلي للقاهرة وأنساقها العمرانية المركبة، كما هدفت أيضا إلى خلق حالة من التفاعل مع قطاع أكبر من المشاركين، بما فيهم سكان القاهرة أنفسهم، ربما لم تتح الفرصة لكثيرين منهم للوقوف على حالة المناطق غير الرسمية على أرض الواقع. ثانيا، تم تنظيم الرحلات بحيث تستعرض ثلاث أنساق عمرانية أساسية بالقاهرة (قلب عمراني متداع، حزام غير رسمي زاحف، وتنمية صحراوية ممتدة) حيث تم اختيار مساراتها بحيث تتضمن مواقع محل نزاع وتفاوض بين السياسات الرسمية من جهة والممارسات العمرانية اليومية من جهة أخرى. وبناءاً على ذلك، حاولت هذه الجولات أن تربط بين مظاهر عمرانية آنية كالباعة الجائلين وجمع القمامة والتعدي على الفراغ العام، مع قضايا عمرانية أشمل وسياسات ممنهجة طويلة المدى كالإسكان والمواصلات والمرافق العامة بالإضافة إلى أنماط مهترئة من الحوكمة العمرانية على كل من المستوى المحلي والقومي. وبذلك ساعدت هذه الجولات على ترسيخ الحوار في جلسات المناقشة المغلقة واضعة قضايا مجردة مثل "الحق في المدينة" و"المواطنة العمرانية" في سياق محلي وخبرة عمرانية يومية.

مصطلحات، وتصنيفات، وإشكالية التعريف بالرغم من المحاولات لتجنب الخوض في تعريفات فقهية فلم تنأ المناقشات عن التطرق لإشكالية التعريف وما تبعه من مناوشات لغوية. فمصطلحات مثل "اللارسمية"، على سبيل المثال، كان يتم استدعائها في كل الجلسات خصوصا أثناء أسئلة المشاركين، نافية بتحدي إمكانية التعريف المطلق، وطارحة أحيانا التساؤل حول الاحتياج لتعريف من الأساس. وكما ذكر "غواتام بان" في الجلسة الختامية: "أعتقد أنه من المهم أن نفهم ما يصفه هذا المصطلح ودلالته بدلا من التمسك بلفظ المصطلح نفسه".

مؤتمر "دروس من القاهـــرة"

هدف المؤتمر والسياق العام للثورة: تطورت فكرة هذا المؤتمر في الأشهر القليلة التي تلت ثورة يناير في سياق التحولات السياسية والعمرانية المتسارعة والمتلاحقة، وما اقترنت به من زيادة الوعي المجتمعي بالقضايا العمرانية والفراغ العام وعلاقته المباشرة بالثورة. وترتكز أحد المنطلقات الفكرية لهذا المؤتمر على إعتبار أن الثورة الحالية هي ثورة عمرانية بإمتياز، من حيث جذورها ومظاهرها وتبعاتها. فلايمكن من هذا المنطلق فصل النظام القمعي في العقود السابقة عن حالة التهميش والإقصاء الاجتماعي وكذا جغرافيا الفصل والتسوير. وقد أدت تلك الظروف مجتمعة إلى حتمية لحظة الإنفجار والتي إتخذت في ذاتها منحي عمرانيا في شوارع وميادين القاهرة والمدن المصرية--ليس فقط كوعاء للثورة ولكن كبنية يعاد صياغتها وتأسيسها باستمرار كتعبير حي ومباشر عن العلاقة الجدلية والمتشابكة بين نظام سياسي متسلط وعمران قهري متأزم. وما تزل تداعيات ثورة القاهرة تتجلى في حالة السيولة السياسية والعمرانية التي نعيشها حاليا.

وفى هذا الإطار يمكن رصد تحولين عمرانيين رئيسين منذ الثورة: الأول تحولات في بنية المدينة والشارع والفراغ العام كالحوائط، والحواجز، والمسيرات، والفن العام كالجرافيتى والساحات الفنية، وكذا الباعة الجائلين، والإنفلات المروري، والتعديات على الطريق العام. أما النتيجة الثانية فيمكن تلخيصها في التحول في ذهنية الفرد والمجتمع تجاه الدولة والسلطة بصفة عامة، وتجاه المدينة والفراغ العام بصفة خاصة. فقد أسهمت ما يمكن أن نسميه "مواطنة عمرانية جديدة" في إعادة صياغة علاقة الافراد والمجتمعات بأحيائهم وشوارعهم في إطار منظومة القوى الجديدة بينهم وبين الدولة - والتي مازالت في حالة ضعف - في خضم حالة من الإستقواء والتمكين التي أدت تباعا إلى تفعيل نمطا جديداً من الإستحواذ على الفراغ العام يمكن تلخيصه في تعبير "إستعادة الحق في المدينة."

الإطار الفكري: في هذا السياق تم طرح فكرة مؤتمر "دروس من القاهرة" من خلال محوريين فكريين أساسيين. يضع المحور الاول القاهرة في سياق عالمي مقارن يهدف إلى خلق حوار نقدي مع تجارب مدن مختلفة في السياسات والتنمية العمرانية، من جهة، وتجربة القاهرة بثورتها العمرانية وتحولاتها السياسية والاجتماعية المصاحبة، من جهة أخرى. ويساهم بذلك في توسيع مساحة الحوار بين المتخصصين والمسئولين ومؤسسات المجتمع المدني في سياق يتجاوز خصوصية المرحلة الراهنة ويتجاوز تأثيره خارج الحدود المحلية. أما المحورالثاني فيستلهم عنوان "دروس من القاهرة" من أدبيات المراجعة للخطاب العمراني الحاكم في ستينيات وسبعينيات القرن الماضي حيث إرتكزت الأدبيات الاولى لعمارة ما بعد الحداثة على نقد الخطاب الحداثي الحاكم وإستقراء بدائل معمارية وعمرانية مما كان يعتبر حينئذ عمارة تجارية أو إستهلاكية على الهامش غير جديرة بالإعتراف والتقدير من قبل المعماريين والمخططين. ونعنى هنا بالتحديد كتاب روبرت فنتورى ودينس براون "دروس من لاس فيجاس" [١٩٧٢]. كما يمكن أيضا ذكر أدبيات المراجعة في فترة الثمانينات والتسعينيات حيث دأبت الاخيرة على نقد وتفكيك مركزية الشمال (أوروبا وأمريكا الشمالية) في الكتابات التاريخية ونظريات العمارة والعمران كما في مثال كتاب "دروس من الفافلاس" [٢٠١٠] .

ومن ثم تستدعى اللحظة الراهنة والحالة العمرانية في القاهرة إعادة صياغة الخطاب العمراني والسياسات العمرانية لإستكشاف دروساً من الهامش وإستنباط أنساقاً بديلة من الحواف كالإسكان غير الرسمي مثلا على المستوى المحلى، ودول الجنوب بصفة عامة على المستوى الاقليمي والدولي. وعليه يسعى هذا المؤتمر إلى خلخلة هذه البنية وإعادة صياغة علاقات القوى بين الشمال والجنوب على مستوى الخطاب الأكاديمي والممارسات المهنية والسياسات العمرانية في سياق الزخم الثوري وإستعادة الحق في المدينة والفراغ العام.

البنية التنظيمية: وقد تم ترجمة هذه الرؤية من خلال بنية ثلاثية للمؤتمر تضع القاهرة في سياق عالمي مقارن مع تجارب مدن مختلفة في أسيا، وأفريقيا، وأمريكا اللاتينية بالإضافة لنماذج من أوروبا والولايات المتحدة، مع التركيز على الخصائص والتجارب المشتركة بالدول النامية. تم تنظيم المؤتمر على ثلاثة أيام يمثل كلا منها وحدة من الحوار وتبادل الخبرات. تضمن اليوم الأول ثلاثة جلسات عامة لعرض التجارب العالمية كما تم صياغة كل جلسة من خلال إطار من خارج تخصص التخطيط العمراني، حيث أسست الجلسة الاولى عمقاً تاريخياً لتجارب دول من الجنوب في حالات تحول سياسي وهيكلي. وطرحت الثانية بعداً سياسياً للثورة العمرانية والحق في المدينة من خلال إستعراض تجارب من أمريكا اللاتينية. وقدمت الثالثة إطارا إقتصاديا للعمران غير الرسمي من وجهات نظر بحثية وتصميمية وتلك المتعلقة بالسياسات العامة والعمرانية. وتم تنظيم اليوم الثاني من خلال مجموعة من الجولات الميدانية للتعرف على الأنساق العمرانية الأساسية في القاهرة كالقلب العمراني المتداعي والحزام غير الرسمي الزاحف والمدن الصحراوية الممتدة، حيث سعت تلك الجولات إلى ترسيخ المناقشات والحوار النقدى لهذا المؤتمر من خلال واقع عمرانى وممارسات ومبادرات منبثقة منذ إنطلاق الثورة. أما اليوم الثالث فتكون من جلسات مناقشة مغلقة ومتوازية، تطرق كلا منها لموضوع عمراني محدد مثل الإسكان والحوكمة والفراغ العام والمشاركة، حيث تم مناقشة كل موضوع في إطار تقابل ما بين التجربة الدولية مع نظيرتها المحلية في القاهرة وذلك من خلال عرض مبادرات ناشئة لممارسين عمرانيين فاعلين في هذه المجالات خلال العامين الماضيين. وإنتهي اليوم الثالث بعقد جلسة ختامية عامة لتقييم جلسات المؤتمر

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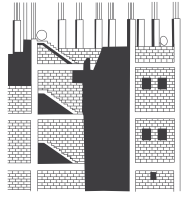
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