



WATERFRONT REGENERATION & CONNECTIONS

CASE STUDY: BULAQ ABUL-ELA

By

Zohrab Bedros Aroshekian

A Thesis Submitted to the
Faculty of Engineering at Cairo University
In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
In
Architectural Engineering

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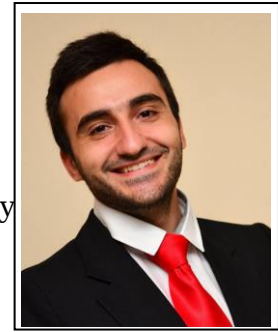
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Key Words:

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Summary:

The relation between waterfronts and human settlements has always been marked as vital intertwined relation since the beginning of civilization, as the water is considered the main source of life, and its existence had the great impact on the evolutionary process of the communities on the urban, social and economic aspects.

The changes and progression have been reflected on the urban morphology of the cities that possess waterfronts. The dynamics of the change sometimes had led to changes in function leaving some places abandoned or unused, accompanied with the emergence of urban barriers between the city and its waterfront. These barriers caused the disconnection of that relation, as it has been witnessed in a number of metropolitans that have waterfronts. As these ports acquired a certain identity, whether industrial, administrative or residential, the changes in the policies had led the desertion of these places, with a negative impact on the urban and social fabrics, reflected on the economic flourishing as well.

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Abstract

“Waterfront Regeneration & Connections” is the main topic of the thesis, taking Bulaq Abul-Ela as a primary case study for this research work. This thesis addresses the urban, social and economic problems that the waterfront cities are facing, that had resulted in the disconnection of the dynamic urban and social relation within their contexts.

Based upon that, this thesis aims to draw a framework to regenerate the waterfronts on the urban, social and economic aspects, and reconnect it with the city, using an analytical approach, illustrate a number of strategies applied on a number of international examples. The focus of this thesis is the case of “Bulaq Abul-Ela” as a primary case study, to propose strategies and solutions for this special case and build a general strategy that concerns the regeneration of the urban relation with the city waterfront.

The first chapter of the thesis builds an essential knowledge about waterfronts by clarifying and setting the definitions of waterfronts on different scholars’ points of view, to help understand the main idea of waterfronts regeneration and reconnecting it with the city, and retracing the changes of patterns caused by development and changes in use of the fabrics that are located on the waterfronts. This will be through the illustration of a number of international and local experiences of waterfront regeneration projects that explains the different approaches of strategies and general visions of regenerating the unused and abandoned spaces within a city context.

In the second chapter, the thesis focuses on two international cases that are similar to the main case study serving the purpose of identifying strategies that approached the problem. The first case is the East River waterfront of New York City in the United States. The second example is regenerating the Glasgow Port in UK. Lessons learnt from these two cases will build a tool to help analyze the main case study, mark the similarities. This will lead to the deduction of a number of alternative solutions and strategies, and build a ground to reach more general strategies for the idea of regenerating the urban connections with the adjacent waterfronts.

The third chapter is mainly concerned of “Bulaq Abul-Ela” as a main case study. First, the chapter retraces the history and urban progression in this area, from the 14th till the 20th century. Then an analysis of the current state on the urban, social and economic conditions will be presented. These results build a comprehensive understanding of the reasons of the disconnections with the Nile Waterfront in this case. The results will be presented in a S.W.O.T. format, to understand the strengths, weaknesses, potentials and threats that describes the situation, and compare it with the previous cases, in order to deduce compatible strategies concerning this case, and to reconnect the historic part of Bulaq with the Nile Waterfront and present suggested model for the study area that reach the thesis’s goal.

The final chapter sums all the pervious conclusions, benefiting from the presented examples, that form an incremental comprehension ground to conclude general recommendations and strategies to regenerate cities waterfronts and reconnecting the communities with their waterfronts.