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Brandenburg
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Cottbus - Senftenberg

REVITALIZATION OF EL-KHALIFA AREA IN HISTORIC CAIRO

By

Farah Hany Abdullah El-Sayed Mohamed Attia

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

Urban Design-Revitalization of Historic City Districts

FACULTY OF ENGINEERING, CAIRO UNIVERSITY
GIZA, EGYPT

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REVITALIZATION OF EL-KHALIFA AREA IN HISTORIC CAIRO

Key Words:

Revitalization; Public spaces; Community engagement; Life quality enhancement.

Summary:

It is very important to revive the historic area in order to conserve its identity through intervention and integrating the community in the revitalization of the area as well as offering more opportunities to new generations according to their needs.

Restoration of monumental structures, reconstruction of the collapsed ones and assuring implementation of regulations and laws of the area plays the role model in revitalizing such a very unique model of Historic City Districts.

All this should take place in a context that respects the very special sensitive community and the strict limitation of public and private spaces available for use.

The proposed intervention can be taken as a guide line for main spines and streets of similar qualifications in El-Khalifa area and other surrounding areas in historic Cairo focusing on the community engagement to assure the success and implementation.

Disclaimer

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own original work and that no part of it has been submitted for a degree qualification at any other university or institute.

I further declare that I have appropriately acknowledged all sources used and have cited them in the references section.

Name: **Farah Hany Abdullah El-Sayed Mohamed Attia** Date: / /2018

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Nomenclature

AKTC	Aga Khan Foundation for Culture
CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
HCRC	Human Capital Research Corporation
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
SCA	Supreme Council of Antiquities
UNESCO-WHC	United Nations Educational, Scientific and cultural Organization- World Heritage Centre
URHC	Urban Regeneration Project for Historic Cairo

Abstract

The historical city of Cairo is one of the oldest historical cities in the world. It was recorded in the UNESCO World Heritage Sites in 1979. It is a lively city rich in architectural and artistic monuments, dating back to the historic period between the Roman era and the Mohammed Ali dynasty era.

Historic Cairo is a very important part of the city. Acting as the heart of Cairo. It is still outstanding through its existing structures and urban fabric, this very special type of well-connected fabric strengthens the impact of such an area and highlights the importance of revitalizing and reviving it. Historic Cairo is a real complication of overlapping and accumulation of history layers through different eras.

Historic Cairo went through a period of dilapidation and deterioration that led to a relevant migration to other parts of the city which affected severely such cohesive communities as well as negligence and lack of adequate knowledge of local communities, their needs, aspirations and hopes, or insufficient appreciation of opportunities, challenges and obstacles. As a result, although many funds and resources have been injected, but the output of most projects in this context has been modest.

For being of such importance the study area for the thesis El-Khalifa area was chosen generally. It is in the historic core of historic Cairo. Especially El-Khalifa Street, the main spine of El-Khalifa area will be the main focus of the study, considered as an extension of El-Moez Street and the southern tip of the historic Cairo boundary, starting from the crossroads of El-Khalifa Street from the north with Toulon Street and Darb El-Hosr and ending at the square of El-Sayeda Nafisa in the south. Recently, the part of El-Khalifa Street that connects between the mosques of El-Sayeda Nafisa and El-Sayeda Sakina was named El-Ashraf Street because it contains the mausoleums of the prophet's lineage.

Focusing on the northwestern side of El-Khalifa district, unlike the administrative point of view, the perceptions of the inhabitants of their area boundaries, are more flexible to overlap the adjacent areas. The Sheyakha El-Saleeba, Darb El-Hosr ,ElBakli and Darb-Ghazeya in the consciousness of the people are parts of El-Khalifa, and even interfere with the other Sheyakha of the neighboring Sayeda Zeinab district like Sheyakha Toulon and Zainhom.

Throughout history El-Khalifa is counted as one of the most significant districts of historic Cairo, that is affecting strongly the surrounding areas depending on its special unique character resulting from different aspects that will be highlighted throughout this research;

Historically; the existence of this geographical area dates back to more than one thousand and one hundred years, now occupies the area of El-khalifa, chanted with number of monuments and registered buildings.

Urban fabric; a very unique compact urban tissue, self-secured, with very narrow streets tending to be pedestrian zones with very fine details and uses, strong urban memory of the place as well as some monuments that dates back to incidences and assures its strong historic identity.

Socially; interconnected, gender sensitive community that shares the area as both live and work space.

Architecturally; the area is full of architectural buildings with aesthetical values, detailed ornaments and very fine special architectural elements.

Governance; mostly ministry of endowment along with both ministry of antiquities and ministry of housing with a realized interference of NGO's that organizes socio-cultural activities for the area.

Services; a homogeneous mixed uses and supplies serving the area market, schools, hospital, shops, youth centers and workshops.

Touristic; vivid with local and foreign tourists, with a very special type of religious tourism and rituals along with the normal monumental tourism that gives the area a higher priority.

Mobility; easily connected to all surroundings facing some traffic problems in inner streets but very well connected and easy to reach from Salah Salem one of the main city connectors away from being connected to a public transportation network.

This research states the problem of such a rich area with monuments and registered buildings, with an apposition to one of the most important world lists associated with a

gap in the weak trials of revitalization and rehabilitation of similar areas between the socio-cultural background of the inhabiting community and their needs to be fulfilled through the proposed plans that misleads the implementation leading to a partial failure in solving the problem.

The study area is in need for sufficient strategy and additional physical and non-physical elements to fill the obvious gap in this area and likely other similar areas like height violations of some buildings on very narrow streets, unregulated huge market space (piazza), number of buildings and shops that are not in use and disappearance of pedestrian pavement.

Aiming to revive the history, urban image and identity of the area with a strategy of adaptively reusing some buildings that have special architectural features and still surviving with good structures by introducing new functions compatible with the existing structure, engaging the community and their communal activities to maintain a friendly-touristic area with enhancing the self-supplying economic base and offering this area as a connector not a divider to the surrounding similar areas, keeping the main urban fabric unchanged respecting the culture offering some recreational spaces that serves the community.

Following a methodology of tracing old functions and old uses through study and analysis of available data of the area as well as field notes with people from the area during the survey to gather information that are lacking due to defect in database and documentation respecting the physical fabric as well as the social aspect, offering drawings, sections and models for design intervention proposals that will fill the gap on the socio-cultural, urban and housing levels.

It's expected to reach a strategy that revitalizes the area in order to conserve its identity through integrating the community as well as offering more opportunities to new generations according to their needs.

All this should take place in a context that respects the very special sensitive community and the huge regulation of public and private spaces available for use. The proposed intervention can be taken as a guide line for main spines and streets of similar qualifications in El-Khalifa area and other surrounding areas in historic Cairo focusing on the community engagement to assure the success and implementation .