

Safety and Security of Cities: Towards a Conceptual Framework Appropriate for the Egyptian Context

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(Urban Planning)

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Urban Planning

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Statement

This thesis is submitted as a partial fulfilment of Master of Science in Architectural Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Ain shams University.

The author carried out the work included in this thesis, and no part of it has been submitted for a degree or a qualification at any other scientific entity.

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Abstract

The need for shelter, safety and security deeply affects our urban environment. Cities witness growing threats to safety and security due to its vulnerability. These threats were not taken into consideration during the city's planning phase, which to a more comprehensive solution in order to be able to face such threats. However, in Egypt, the militarized solution with its security measures was the first to be adopted without any reflection on the legal framework or planning decisions. The militarization and fortification of the city affects its urban form, traffic patterns, pedestrian mobility, and the street life.

Urban security is a major concern, especially against acts of violence that call for mitigation strategies to become a safe city resilient to different types of urban violence. Both the concept of vulnerability and resilience have been increasingly embedded in urban planning and city safety, mainly to describe how cities try to overcome disasters and shocks.

Notably, the environmental design contributing in city safety is not new to urban planning and design as it firstly emerged in Jane Jacobs's book, *The Life and Death of Great American Cities* (1961), where she suggests that a successful city is where a person can feel safe and secure in the streets. This concept has been developed through several theories, which would be reviewed and criticized in this research.

The study examines city safety and security issues and the different urban threats. It discusses urban violence, its different types namely terrorism and crime, their impacts on our cities and the different theories and strategies of mitigation and response; all within the concept of vulnerability and the risk chain with its three main elements which are; Risk, Outcomes and Response. Eventually, it examines the case study of Cairo after the events of Jan 25, its vulnerability, and the outcomes of violence on the shape of the city and the used responses and mitigation strategies.

Finally, the research came to the conclusion that urban violence is a matter of good urban governance, with the focus on social awareness and community based approaches as a long term radical solution; that might help in reducing the risk factors. In the case study of Egypt most of the outcomes were not directly bounded to violence, but rather a secondary outcome, which mostly resulted from the military oriented approach during the absence of other stakeholder groups from the scene.

Keywords: Urban Violence, Urban Security, Militarization, Urban Fortification.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

The human's fundamental need is for survival, which includes the need for shelter, safety and security, these needs affects our environment deeply (Maslow, 1987). "Over the past decade, the world has witnessed growing threats to the safety and security of cities and towns. Some have come in the form of catastrophic events, while others have been manifestations of poverty and inequality or of rapid and chaotic urbanization processes" (UN Habitat, 2007b, p. 7). Recently urban design and planning had to deal with antisocial behavior that affects our city's safety and security such as terrorism, crime and vandalism, through designing to reduce the opportunities and outcomes of such events on urban form and the appearance of cities. Also ensuring that security design has no conflict with maintaining the amenities and aestheticism of the space (Lang, 2005). City safety is a priority due to its vulnerability and not only because of its density. In addition, it is the political, economic and cultural center (Jacobs, 1961). However, lately cities became militarized and dominated by the security measures (J. Coaffee, 2009). Now the question is what role will planners and designers play in this war?

The contribution of environmental design in city safety emerged in Jane Jacobs's book, *The Life and Death of Great American Cities* (1961). Where she suggested that a successful city is where a person can feel safe and secure in the streets. Urban security has become a major concern especially against acts of violence -urban terrorism and crime- that calls

for mitigation strategies to become a safe city resilient to different types of urban violence.

The concept of vulnerability have become increasingly embedded in urban planning and addressing different safety and security issues, and the use of urban securitization and contingencies planning to minimize the risk. Vulnerability can be better studied through the "Risk Chain" and its key components: risk, response and outcome (Alwang, Siegel, Jørgensen, & Tech, 2001; UN Habitat, 2007b).

Even though urban violence and crime may cause injury, death and physical destruction, it also leads to a long-lasting trauma and psychological effect through spreading the feeling of insecurity and fear among citizens. Threats such as terrorism do not target only population but also civilization by attacking the physical environment, especially landmarks and symbolic forms (F.Paizs, 2013). The media plays a critical role in the perception of insecurity in cities that it depends on the amount and flow of information the residents get, and this fear contributes largely to the decline of the urban quality in cities (UN Habitat, 2007b).

This study examines urban violence, its different types - terrorism and crime-, and their outcomes on our cities. It also discusses the concept of vulnerability in relation to the risk chain and its three main components; risk, outcomes and response. It examines the vulnerability of mega-cities and potential targets. The study reviews three international examples with different context: Toronto, London and the US Embassy in Germany by applying the risk management process. Finally, it assesses the safety and security situation in Egypt and the Greater Cairo Region and explores the