

M. Donelson, G. Vignola, W. Dickhaut, Xh. Haveriku

Cairo's Urban Transformation

Mohandeseen and Zamalek Narratives



IMPRINT

© HafenCity University Hamburg (HCU) and Cairo University (CU), 2018. Texts by kind permission of the authors. Pictures if not credited otherwise published with kind permission of HCU and CU. All rights reserved.

Concept: Gionatan Vignola & Maya Donelson

Editors: Maya Donelson, Gionatan Vignola, Wolfgang Dickhaut, Xhelona Haveriku | HCU Hamburg

Co-authors: Abbadi, E., Abdelhady, A., Abegunrin, O., Amaral, R., Amer, M., Ardila, J., Berninger, R., Camara, C., De Lima, J., Eihusseiny, M., Elmeligy, A., Elnadi, N., Elnour, N., Elsaieed, A., Elshaar, M., Emad, A., Esmen, E., Geleta, S., Guasp, D., Haiba, A., Kamel, R., Lopes, A., Magar, M., Magdy, S., Mazzara, C., Mohamed, E., Mostafa, H., Mostafa, R., Nada, H., Niaei, P., Ovri, V., Pascoli, C., Phillips, W., Ramirez, S., Rumiantceva, K., Salem, A., Salvisberg, E., Sengen, H., Tortelli, C., Trakantalerngsak, L., Yilmaz, M.

Design and layout: Xhelona Haveriku

Translation to Arabic: Heba Allah E. Khalil

Distribution:

HafenCity University Hamburg | Department of Environmentally Sound Urban and Infrastructure Planning | Prof. Dr.-Ing. Wolfgang Dickhaut | www.reap.hcu-hamburg.de | wolfgang.dickhaut@hcu-hamburg.de

Cairo University | Department of Architectural Engineering | Prof. Dr. Sahar Attia | <http://arch.eng.cu.edu.eg/> | sahar.attia@gmail.com

ISBN: 978-3-941722-82-8

M. Donelson, G. Vignola, W. Dickhaut, Xh. Haveriku

Cairo's Urban Transformation Mohandeseen and Zamalek Narratives

Workshop participants // Co-authors

Mohandeseen, Lebanon Street

Interviews on pages 8-11, photos on pages 30-45

Alaa Emad Abdelbaset Ahmed, Cairo University
Johanna Cortes Ardila, HafenCity University
Noura Hamada Abu Elnour, Cairo University
Aya Alsaieed Elsaieed, Cairo University
Ecesu Esmen, HafenCity University
Samson Geleta, HafenCity University
Lanna Trakantalerngsak, HafenCity University
Mert Yilmaz, HafenCity University

Mohandeseen, Aswan Square

Interviews on pages 12-15, photos on pages 46-61 and arabic cover

Oluwaseun Abegunrin, HafenCity University
Miral Essam Abou-Elfetouh Ali Amer, Cairo University
Camila Maria Camara, HafenCity University
Abdelrahman El-Sayed Mohamed Haiba, Cairo University
Andrea da Costa Carvalho Almeida Lopes, HafenCity University
Maggie Leon Magar, Cairo University
Parvaneh Niaei, HafenCity University
Abdulhady Ramadan, Cairo University
Emily Salvisberg, HafenCity University

Zamalek, Ismael Mohammed Street

Interviews on pages 16-19, photos on pages 62-77

Aya Mohamed Faried Elmeligy, Cairo University
Marwa Ahmed Mostafa Elshaar, Cairo University
Rashed Mostafa Kamel, Cairo University
Hind Mostafa Mohamed Mostafa, Cairo University
Victor Ovri, HafenCity University
Wesley Alistair Phillips, HafenCity University
Susana Giraldo Ramirez, HafenCity University
Carla Tortelli, HafenCity University

Zamalek, 26th of July Street

Interviews on pages 20-23, photos on pages 78-93

Esraa Mohamed Abbadi, Cairo University
Rebekka Berninger, HafenCity University
Malak Emad Eihusseiny, Cairo University
Shaimaa Magdy, Cairo University
Clarisa Mazzara, HafenCity University
Hossam Nada, HafenCity University
Hans Sengen, HafenCity University

Zamalek, Abou El Feda Street

Interviews on pages 24-27, photos on pages 94-109 and english cover

Robertta von Zimmermann Amaral, HafenCity University
Juliana Braga Webel de Lima, HafenCity University
Nourhan Mohamed Elnadi | *Cairo University*
David Martinez Guasp, HafenCity University
Esraa Walid Abbas Mohamed, Cairo University
Rashed Mostafa, Cairo University
Cesar Coimbra Pascoli, HafenCity University
Kristina Rumiantceva, HafenCity University
Ahmed Mohamed Nour Salem, Cairo University

Opening

Not unlike other major cities around the world, Cairo has undergone a significant transformation over the course of its long history. While some elements of the past are still visible, the most notable being the Pyramids of Giza, other elements have long since disappeared. It is hard to imagine that historic Cairo was once at the center of a fertile landscape dotted with lakes, especially when confronted with today's realities of a dense mostly gray cityscape covered by a thin layer of dust and a host of environmental problems.

Cairo is the largest mega-city on the African continent and it continues to transform rapidly, both formally and informally. In an effort to guide Cairo's transformation and limit informal development on its remaining fertile land, new state funded desert cities are being planned, built and inhabited. At the same time, massive tower blocks have replaced the once characteristic large prosperous villa estates within formally developed core-city areas such as Zamalek and Mohandeseen. In Zamalek this transformation has caused many upper class residents to withdraw to the desert cities leaving behind signs of decay, while Mohandeseen has become one of the most expensive areas in Cairo leaving almost no trace of the Garden City concept which guided its early development. While much needed attention goes to the expansion and improvement of informal areas and to the creation of new desert cities, it is also important to learn from the past as well as to guide the future transformation of core-city areas such as Mohandeseen and Zamalek. The following investigates the transformation of select areas of Mohandeseen around Lebanon Street and Aswan Square in addition to Zamalek to the north of the Gezira Sporting Club.



Mohandeseen
Lebanon Street

Mohandeseen
Aswan Square

Zamalek
Abou El Feda Street

Zamalek
Ismael Mohammed Street

Zamalek
26th of July Street



[m]

500

Source: Google Earth 7.1.8 (10.02.2018). Cairo. 30°03'13.46"N, 31°12'41.85"E, elevation 0M. DigitalGlobe. Viewed 03.12.2008.

الخاتمة

تمنح السرديات البصرية والشفهية نظرة خاطفة للماضي، توثق الحاضر وتمثل مصدر الهام للمستقبل. وعلى الرغم من أن الساكنين والزائرين قد وجدوا أنه أسهل عليهم النظر إلى الماضي والحنين إلى ما قد كان، إلا أن هذا يذكر بأن النظر إلى الأمام له نفس الأهمية في القدرة على رؤية وتخطيط وتنفيذ تدخلات تيسر تحول المدينة بشكل مستدام.

Oral Narratives

Residents and visitors were interviewed about the urban transformation process.



"I cannot afford a taxi every day."

Fawzy Hessen Ahmed
60 years old
Male nurse
Lebanon Street

See related photos on page 30 - 33

For the last five months, Fawzy Hessen Ahmed commutes from his home, located in an informal settlement named Ard El Lewa, to his current job on Lebanon Street. Due to the proximity between his home and work environment, transportation hasn't been a problem. Moreover, he adds "it only takes 20 minutes". Considering the chaotic traffic situation in Cairo, commuting less than an hour per day is miraculous. However, the absence of public transport on the street undoubtedly brings about the question of finance. He says, "I cannot afford a taxi every day." Not only on Lebanon Street but throughout Cairo, traffic is a considerable obstacle.

Migration, a growing population and mishandled traffic management lead to

the current transportation chaos which affects the city. Besides, the high price of daily needs is an extra cost for Fawzy Hessen Ahmed as a male nurse.

The majority of the residents on and around Lebanon Street are from the Emirates and Saudi Arabia. Additionally, he includes, "dealing and working with high-class residents is pleasant." He also mentions how the Egyptian revolution in 2011 transformed land use. It altered the area to a commercial and administrative neighborhood.

Nabil Nagiub Saweras
40 years old
Apartment Security Guard
Lebanon Street

See related photos on page 34 - 37

Change is an undesirable process and by many, even resisted. However, we need to look at the events in a realistic way and see the positive and negative aspects. Cairo is a city under constant change as a result of population growth and economic reasons.

Mohandeseen's transformation contributed positively to the area and surrounding neighborhoods. It transformed from villas and mansions to high rise residential buildings. The first two floors on the Lebanon street are mainly occupied by commercial uses such as cafes, restaurants, stores or banks. These facilities and high-end apartment buildings produced employment opportunities with people living in the surrounding neighborhoods. "I am living

"Neighborhood transformation brought plenty of job opportunities."

in Ard-El Lewa as are many others who are working in the stores you see here" he repeatedly states. He has been working for ten years as a security guard for a high-rise building.

A negative aspect of this transformation and a growing population is traffic congestion on Lebanon street and many other places in the city. It takes more than an hour to commute for many. Moreover, he states "it harms poor people most". However, he also mentions that for him, Lebanon Street is within 30 minutes walking distance. Other transportation options include either a private car or a taxi, which brings with it financial difficulties and creates a poor working environment within the city. Public transport only exists on a few major roads in Cairo.



“Lebanon Street is one of the most beautiful places in Cairo.”

Ahmed Saied
27 years old
Accountant and Football Player
Lebanon Street

See related photos on page 38 - 41

Working at Lebanon Street for three years, Ahmed Saied is there almost every day. He works five days per week and hangs around the street the rest of a week because of the facilities it offers. He mentions that “Lebanon Street is one of the most beautiful and comfortable places in Cairo.”

Ahmed is living in the Al-Haram district which also offers various facilities. It is a district where middle income people live. It takes 30 minutes to get to Lebanon Street from his home by motorcycle. He says, “to reach Lebanon Street people mostly use taxis. They don’t use public transport because it is not efficient.” He feels safe in the area because there are security guards around and also one central police station. Even though “Meet

Okba” creates a problem, it won’t effect Lebanon street because of these security facilities. However, there are also some negative aspects of the area as it is too expensive and crowded. Traffic jams are disastrous and there is a lack of space to park cars.

“Nowadays, the area turned into a commercial and administrative region”. That’s why foreign people mainly from other Arabic countries are renting apartments here in the summer season.

Concerning the transformation of informal settlements, he states that “I am not a resident of the area. Even though, if I were, I wouldn’t leave my life here and go anywhere else. So, I cannot agree with the removal of Meet Okba even if it is informal and dangerous.”

Nourhan Khaled
16 years old
Secondary School Student
Lebanon Street

See related photos on page 42 - 45

“Because of shifts from informal settlements, the area loses its quality.”

Nourhan Khaled comes to Lebanon Street almost six days per week to shop, have fun and meet with her friends. She is living at El-Sodan Street nearby Lebanon Street. She comes to the area by walking half an hour or in 15 minutes by taxi. She is not willing to use public transportation.

Due to her age, she has not noticed any change to the street. She is also not aware of the political and economic events happening in the country.

Nourhan Khaled is happy to be here because the area is commercial, offering her many services and facilities suitable for every need. While the street is crowded, it is not a problem for her, and there are not many disadvantages of the street except it is close to “Meet Okba”.

She feels that the people who come to Lebanon Street from “Meet Okba” negatively affects her because she feels exposed to harassment. Furthermore, she states that “because of these shifts from informal settlements, the area loses its quality.”

Therefore, she agreed on the removal or transformation of “Meet Okba” and all informal settlements like it. It has adverse effects on the place and the people.



“The neighborhood was intended by the government to be a model garden city.”

Mohammed Helal
71 years old
Retired
Aswan Square

See related photos on page 46 - 49

Mohammed Helal has memories of the time in which his four-story building was the only luxury villa in the area of Aswan Square, previously named “Fawzia Princess”. His house, built on his father’s orders in 1956, has now ceased to be the place for summer retreats in 1962. His family moved in permanently, and the remaining land started to be occupied by other villas owned by actors and actresses, or businessmen like his father.

Mohammed could see the complete transformation of his neighborhood as the planned garden-city space once filled with villas with front gardens fading away as higher buildings began to emerge. Neighbors were no longer known. The traffic that used to be an uncommon sight became a norm.

Mohammed sees the transformation as damaging and emphasized the speed at which it took place, especially after the revolution. He talks about people struggling to keep the shape of their houses, implying the pressure of the real estate market.

Mohammed’s fondness for the neighborhood of the past makes it hard for him to see any potential for sustainable transformation in the area. He is caught in the web of the changes within his history but indicates no opportunities for a brighter future. Mohammed’s speech reflects the challenge of connecting the older residents to the area they have at present.

Mr Samir
55 years old
Building Materials Supplier
Al Falouga Street

See related photos on page 50 - 53

Aswan Square is bordered on its northern edge by Al-Haytya, an informal and tightly compacted cluster of mixed housing, businesses and services.

Mr. Samir is a businessman, who was raised and has lived in Al-Haytya for 55 years, with his family forming part of early agricultural contract subdivisions. The present-day Government is placing pressure on Al-Haytya to demolish and redevelop to be consistent with the modernity and density of changing Aswan Square, but luckily for Mr. Samir and his community, Al-Haytya building contracts prevail.

Aswan Square relies on Mr. Samir’s services amongst others, which offer a variety of different businesses including

“ We don’t go to them, they come to us for commercial purposes.”

stores for building materials, vegetables, carpenter workshops and car mechanics.

Despite the wealth disparity and stark contrast of urban form between the areas, Al-Haytya was, as Mr. Samir recalls, built first. He remembers early Aswan Square as unused and vacant land which was then built up as villas for the middle classes. He recalls the start of villa demolition seven years ago and their rebuilding to high rise flats for profit. He sees the challenge as not losing the valuable community and synergistic services provided in the area to lucrative development pressure. He does not see an opportunity for transformative change for Aswan Square; rather that it is bound to its present built form and situation.



"Before it wasn't so crowded. It was so quiet here."

A'am Ashraf
67 years old
Street Grocery Seller
Abou Al Karamat Street

See related photos on page 54 - 57

Aswan Square neighborhood caters to local inhabitants and visitors. A'am Ashraf is a fresh grocery seller who has operated his small family business from the Square's street-edge for up to 20 years, placing him as a key observer to the surrounding streets' changing social and physical landscape. In early days of trading, he sold to wealthy clientele inhabiting the local garden bordered villas, with frequenting influential actresses, politicians and businessmen.

As the lower density character of the area transitioned to higher rise development, he noticed that more and more people neighbored on the edge of the Square, crowding the streets with pedestrians and vehicles, changing the once tidy, quiet atmosphere to a flurry of activity.

He notices that more high rises fashioning a classical and elegant downtown Cairo style are taking form along the streets, but also pricing out many longer-term businesses with hair salons.

He regretfully noticed that the clientele has changed with wealthy inhabitants being replaced by more every-day folk, who don't always shop at his store. But he is still known in this neighborhood, and that is why he stays. A key challenge remains however, in how he should maintain his business in this setting. He doesn't see a likelihood of a transformation on the horizon for Aswan Square, just a continuation of the density and cars choking its streets.



Nihal
27 years old
Teaching Assistant at Cairo University
El Ashgar Street

See related photos on page 58- 61

"I just pass by. There is no place where you can stay and observe the area."

The Aswan Square area has been a part of Nihal's life since birth, be it due to her aunt living there or her simple need to walk through it weekly as she moves to and from her own house in a neighboring location. Her urban designer background enriches her perspective as a frequent visitor.

Nihal admits that she never uses the functions available at Aswan Square. She remarks on the impossibility of doing so. Even with the scarcity of open green areas in Cairo, she has no memory of ever playing in the square as a child or sitting there with friends as a teenager. No surface invites the passers-by to stay. The commercial function is not needed, as she can find the same type of businesses in more convenient places.

Her vision for opportunities refers precisely to how the spaces are not being used to their full potential. The green areas are not prepared to receive visitors, and the sidewalks are not available for pedestrians. Nihal describes how she moves from the footpaths occupied by everything except for people to the lanes where it is necessary to compete with the constant flow of cars. The transformation was not sustainable so far, but maybe it can be for the future.

Nihal completes her perspective referring to a great challenge: the heavy traffic, unplanned for in an area designed for the low density of the villas. Most of these low-rise buildings do not exist anymore, and the narrow streets do not correspond to the current physical form of the area.



"I have no pictures of the old neighborhood, that is my biggest regret"

Farouk El-Danny
77 years old
Dry Cleaning Service Business Owner
Ismail Mohamed Street, Zamalek

See related photos on page 62 - 65

Frouk El-Dany, a 77-year old owner of a dry cleaning business, has been residing in Zamalek for 60 years. In the past, according to Mr. El-Dany, Zamalek was distinguished by high-class villas that were single-family homes with a private garden and garage. The produce of these gardens contributed to the vast greenery of the island's landscape. The streets also had enough room to facilitate walking as cars were kept in the private garages.

He asserted that the quality of life in Zamalek was tremendously affected during the 70's, when lower class Egyptians living in other districts earned enough money while working in the Gulf States to move to the island. Examples he gave for Zamalek's declining quality include the increased building density

and lack of maintenance as a result of migration. He said that some of the villas have been reused as the Faculty of Arts, converted into commercial purposes, or replaced by hundreds of apartment buildings.

Previously, from a one of Zamalek's streets, one could see the pyramids and the Nile. However, the view of these attractions has been blocked by the development of Mohandeseen and the buildings which have been built along the shore of the Nile.

"I miss the quiet in Zamalek," he said, "I wish I could go back in time." He now describes Zamalek as an informal market with informal vendors on the streets.

Hajj Mohamed
73 years old
Resident and Owner of a Supermarket
Ismail Mohamed Street, Zamalek

See related photos on page 66 - 69

Hajj Mohamed is 73 years old and owns a supermarket in Zamalek, where he was born. According to Hajj Mohamed, the district was formerly inhabited by respectable and famous people who possessed good values. These inhabitants protected Zamalek from intrusion, while maintaining the safety and cleanliness of the community.

In the past regulations mandated buildings to make provision for garages and prohibited cars from parking on the street. He also said that the Nile served as a direct water supply, rich in silt, for cultivation, thereby predominantly situated along the coast of the island. In turn, fresh water was saved. He went on to explain that the drainage system was destroyed and covered with layers

"Its image has been Transformed. Beggars run after tourists"

of asphalt. These coatings then raised the level of the streets; elevated buildings became the same as or below the current street level.

Mr. Mohamed also revealed that the concept of being neighbors and friends is now lost in Zamalek. Social behaviors have changed negatively because of current residents and the neighborhood lacks a sense of security. Addressing a sweet potato vendor at the corner of the street, he claims that this portrays the informal market which is ruining the image of the area and occupying the streets.

In the past, the district had few kindergartens and primary schools. Today there are large number of faculties today, complemented by banks and ministries.



“This used to be a nice area...used to”

Hebba Bakri
59 years old
Managing Director at Hotel Longchamps
21 Ismail Mohamed Street, Zamalek

See related photos on page 70 - 73

Hebba Bakri has been living and working in Zamalek since 2002. According to Hebba, the most noticeable changes include the shift in the economic profile of the district and the behavior of residents.

She is nostalgic about what the area used to be, and pointed out that Zamalek was traditionally characterized by affluent residents, some of which later moved out to new neighborhoods. This made room for outsiders to occupy the areas, bringing with them different behavior. Hebba argued that people are now careless and there is a lack of a sense of community. Streets are littered indiscriminately attracting rats and stray cats to the area. In addition, several cafés operate without a permit and invite

people to stay out late. Customers at these illegal establishments usually make noise and disturb neighboring residents.

Hebba also recounted that over the years, the elegant villas have been replaced by awful multi-story buildings. She fears that the foundations of these high-rise buildings and sidewalks are giving way.

As for the future, she shows special concern about the metro station under construction. According to Hebba, the metro would raise friction between social classes, and possibly bring violence.

At the end of the interview, as she heard a rooster crow, she said, “This is very new. It started three weeks ago. We have never had this before in the area.”



Abanob Michel
21 years old
Department of Architecture Student
21 Ismail Mohamed Street, Zamalek

See related photos on page 74 - 77

Abanob is a 21-year old student who recalls mingling with friends in Zamalek, before undertaking his undergraduate studies at the Faculty of Fine Arts five years ago. He stated, “I think the number of students attending universities has doubled in the past few years and has led to the opening of new shops including cafés and the introduction of other services.” Though satisfied with these new additions to the district, he hopes that more open spaces could be provided for students to hold art-related activities, as well as for the provision of public toilets.

According to Abanob, the construction of the metro station, which began a couple of years ago, has caused streets to be overcrowded – for example, traffic jams

“The rest of the streets should be of high priority, just like those near embassies”

are now common as a result of numerous road blocks and detours.

Elaborating on the traffic situation, he continued by pointing out parking as a major issue. He stated, “I think it’s easy to control the back streets and block certain areas to avoid the unacceptable behavior of outsiders. If the authorities could manage the parking problem and prioritized the affected streets like they did with those overlooked by the embassies and diplomatic complexes, it would be better for everyone”.

Abanob concluded by describing the waterfront of Zamalek as a great asset, with the potential to restore Zamalek’s old charm.



“This was the first high-rise building to ever be built in Zamalek.”

A'm Mohamed
80 years old
Car Parking Chief and Guide
26th of July Corridor

See photos on page 78 - 81

A'm Mohamed has been a parking guide in Zamalek since 2014, but lives just across the Nile, in Bulaq Abou El-Ela. He says, the traffic flow has been congested here for a long time now but once the new Metro station of Zamalek is operational, Mohamed expects this congestion will be relatively relieved. It will absorb a considerable fraction of commuters coming into, and out of Zamalek every day.

Mohamed was originally a reinforced concrete worker. He took part in the construction of the Al-Tonsy building in Al-Gabalaya street in the 1970's. This was the first high-rise building to ever be built in Zamalek. By that time, there were only villas in the area. So, the revolutionary project was repeatedly

choked by ferocious campaigns led by Zamalek's residents. Finances were also a challenge and so the owner, Al-Tonsy, took a large loan from Al-Ahly Bank. Each floor has four apartments, and when the building was completed, Al-Tonsy sold the apartments for 17,000 EGP, divided into three installments.

Some years after Egypt's victory in the 1973 war, the real estate market prices soared, and the same apartments would sell at 120,000 EGP, whereas a villa - also built and owned by Al-Tonsy - was sold to a Saudi Arabian man for millions. It is then obvious, how, with worsening economic conditions, it became very lucrative for others to follow that same path. It was at that point, that Al-Tonsy turned from engineer to businessman.



“The bridge was the most useful element in Zamalek.”

Fawzy Mohammed
64 years old
Chauffeur
Hassan Sabry Street

See photos on page 82 - 85

Fawzy Mohammed has been working for the past forty years as a chauffeur for residents in Zamalek. He considers himself a resident of Zamalek, as he works there six days a week, all day long. When Fawzy first started working here, the main tramway ran along the 26th of July Street, extending over a steel bridge. Over the years, when the 6th of October bridge was under construction, the steel bridge was demolished, and its material was recycled to build the linking bridge between Zamalek and El Mohandeseen. He mentioned that remains of the bridge can be found at the Marriott Hotel.

In his perspective, the bridge was the most useful element in Zamalek, as it connects downtown to the 6th of October City, southwest of Cairo.

Forty years ago, the streets were less congested than today. As stated by Fawzy, this is due to the replacement of the villas with high rise buildings. The circular tower in Hassan Sabry Street, with the SODIC logo on top, is a very prominent high-rise building in the neighborhood. Construction was shut down by the government, due to structural violations and has since remained abandoned. Fawzy says, that homeowners of Zamalek, are not enthusiastic about the opening of the new metro station as they worry about the consequences it could have on their buildings infrastructure. In his perspective, however, it presents a great opportunity for people like himself, who work in Zamalek, but live on the outside. Fawzy could then get to work in 30 minutes, rather than 2 hours.



*“The Northerners
focused on money;
Southerners cared
about quality of life.”*

Email Nashed Salaman
72 years old
Stationary Seller
Hassan Assem Street

See related photos on page 86 - 89

The increase of Zamalek’s population, commencing with Egypt’s policy of an open economy, caused the change from two-way streets to one-way streets, as found in Zamalek today, says Salaman. At the southern side of the 26th of July corridor, the stakeholders abide by the rules and building regulations, keeping the ground floors of the buildings as non-commercial. Opposite, the northern stakeholders did not abide by these laws and transformed the buildings ground floor into commercial space. According to Salaman, the northerners were rather focused on money, while the Southerners cared more about their quality of life.

He claims, that the cooperative complex in Zamalek and the establishment of institutions, such as schools and colleges

increased the number of visitors to the area. This causes congestion in the streets, which were designed to support residential buildings of up to two stories. The increased number of users on each plot of land, due to larger buildings with intensified use, was not considered during the urban planning phase.

The ground floors in the northern part of Zamalek, contrary to the original plan of accommodating parked vehicles, where transformed into retail space, increasing the demand for parking areas, simultaneously reducing the availability. Additionally, Salaman criticizes, the new high-rise buildings for not always abiding by the original plot parameters, therefore encroaching on the formerly wide pedestrian sidewalk.

Effat Nermine
63 years old
Psychiatrist
Shagaret Al Dor Street

See related photos on page 90 - 93

Effat Nermine has been a resident in Zamalek for 30 years. She lives here with her husband and children. To commute to her work in Heliopolis, she uses her car every day. The trip takes her about one hour.

The transformation Effat Nermine has witnessed, is the neighborhood getting more crowded and more “creeps” trying to make a living in the area. Furthermore, foreign tenants are increasingly preferred over Arabs in her building.

Nermine believes that the metro station will destruct Zamalek and be a catastrophe for the neighborhood. As the new metro line will connect Al-Es’af, an informal settlement, with the elite neighborhood of Zamalek. Nermine fears

*“The metro station
will destruct
Zamalek - It will be a
catastrophe”*

that this connection will bring even more low-income people to her neighborhood. However, she enthusiastically describes how during valentines day, the island becomes crowded with couples, celebrating their love and flower vendors.

Nermine claims to have seen no major changes to the building stock in the last years. But she does mention differences between the north and south of the 26th of July street. Those differences go back to the historic beginning of the urban development in the south. In her opinion this is the fancier part of Zamalek. However, Nermine mentions the popularity of living in the north, the so-called Bahari (towards the sea) of Zamalek, since the prevailing north wind provides natural cooling.



*"I used to observe
Um-kelsom's villa
from my porch."*

Rawya Famol
74 years old
Retired
El-Malek El-Fadl Street

See related photos on page 94 - 97

Rawya is now 74 years old and lives in El Zamalek since the age of thirteen. Rawya, her husband, daughter, and grandson all share a small two-bedroom apartment on El-Malek El-Fadl street. She has witnessed the transformation of the area from farmland, to a bustling neighborhood with intense traffic and new buildings.

She used to sit on a swinging chair on the porch, smoking a cigarette and sipping coffee. From her porch, Rawya could see the famous Egyptian artist Um-kelsom's villa. With joy in her eyes, she expresses how much she loved the singer and how comforting it was to sit there and appreciate time passing by.

Rawya no longer relates to the neighborhood as much since it has gone through its profound transformation. Where there used to be the villa, a fifteen-story hotel now rises in front of the Nile. The Nile is also not as clean as it used to be.

Even though the price Rawya pays for renting her apartment is considerably below the market value, she dreams of moving to the 6th of October area, where she could go back to experiencing comfort and beauty.



Mohamed Shaikon
32 years old
Antique Shop Owner
Abou El Feda Street

See related photos on page 98 - 101

Island of Princes - this is how Zamalek used to be known, back when all the streets were named after a member of the royalty. That is part of the history that Mohamed Shaikon remembers about the area. He is 32 years old and owns an antique shop on Abou El Feda Street.

Today, some of the remaining palaces were given other uses, such as universities and schools, he says. Mohamed misses the view of the Nile River he once had. Due to the excessive bars and restaurants along the river-banks, and boats causing ripples, he is no longer able to see the river. The narrow streets in the neighborhood now accommodate more activities than they were initially planned for, resulting in intense foot and vehicle traffic.

*"There are a lot of
restaurants and cafes
here that we do not
need."*

Like so many others on the same street, Mohamed's shop facade has recently been renovated. Now his impression is that, on the street level, some of the shops look more modern than the neighboring buildings - spoiling the identity of the original architecture.

A metro station is about to open nearby, although not all the residents and business owners support the idea. From Mohamed's point of view, the metro will only increase insecurity and bring more traffic, noise, and pollution.



"Zamalek is not as inviting as it used to be."

Esmael Rafat
43 years old
Guard
Abou El Feda Street

See related photos on page 102 - 105

Esmael Rafat has lived on the northern bank of the Gezira island for the last 20 years. He works as a guard for one of the historic residential buildings erected in the neighborhood during the middle of the 20th century. He used to require special permission to enter the island, and he enjoyed the privacy.

Loving the silent beauty of old Zamalek, Esmael does not look forward to the new metro station which he believes will affect the existing infrastructure and cause further crowding on the island.

Until 2007, a bus station served as the main transportation source for residents and visitors of Zamalek. Following new developments on the island, traffic became much more intense. Over the

past few years, the streets have filled with noise and constant traffic jams. Lack of parking space became one of the biggest problems, Ismael points out.

New buildings and uncontrolled extensive vegetation grew on the Nile embankment and hid the river from people's eyes. As such, Esmael hopes the city will take care of green spaces along the river Nile so he could enjoy the view he loves so much again. He wishes Zamalek could return to be as calm and green as it used to be during the King Farouk era.



"I wish I could see the Nile River from my terrace once again."

Rashwan Tawfeek
86 years old
Actor
Abou El Feda Street

See related photos on page 106 - 109

The famous Egyptian actor, Rashwan Tawfeek, has been renting an apartment in Zamalek since 1960. Like many other buildings in the neighborhood, his building used to be a club for local residents. In the past he enjoyed walking by the Nile with his wife - now impossible because of all the clubs occupying the river bank since the 1970's.

When the university is in session, Abu El Feda Street can get very crowded. Most students would like more parking, but residents generally oppose the idea, as they benefit from the private garages. The actor sees the new metro station in Zamalek as a good opportunity for students and local workers to commute to Zamalek, while reducing the number of cars. Concerning the opposition to

the new station among his neighbors, he explains that some are afraid of vibrations affecting the older structures.

Formerly farm-land, Zamalek turned into a neighborhood with classical architecture during the King Ismaeel era. The "amazing villas" on Abu El Feda Street were illegally demolished and turned into taller buildings. Rashwan adds that nowadays these buildings' facades are dirty and should be renovated.

He explains that there is no room for more green space. The existing trees on the streets show signs of dehydration while the trees along the Nile are growing too much and darkening the banks. He envisions shorter trees and clubs that do not harm the view of the river.

سرديات شفوية

توثق المقابلات للتحويلات العمرانية من وجهة نظر
الساكين والزائرين للمنطقة. كما أنها كانت مصدر
الهام للصور.

Visual Narratives

The interviews served as inspiration to
photographically capture elements of
the urban transformation.







ميت عقبة
مدينة 6 أكتوبر
6th Of Oct. City
الاسكندرية الصحراوي
مباشرة
Alex. Des. Rd.
Directly

NEW KAFAMEYA'S
FIRST RESIDENTIAL
DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT 5 FIVE
RESIDENCES
BY HADRAMUT
19876

بتحور علي
شقة
فيلا
مكتب
كلم لاند بيك
6 أكتوبر
011 29 66 99 11 - 38 38 38 49

19011







SM
SOHEIR WAKHOOD
HAUTE COUTURE





مخزنية للصرافة
ALHORIA EXCHANGE

it's: your choice

it's

19011

شارع لبنان
Lebanon St.











Kriss





برجده منطقه قرآن کریم
شماره تماس: ۰۱۰۹۲۸۲۸۵۶۹







SALLY FLATS
WERENT FLATS
NO.7 ISMEIL MOH.STR.ZAMALEK



مسار ومحطة المترو فى الزمالك
خطر على السكان
والأرواح والتراث المعمارى

فلنحافظ معاً على الزمالك































scib Paints
Colourworld
تسليم الدهانات بالكمبيوتر
١٧ شارع النهضة علي - القاهرة
٢٧٣٥٨٣١٤





McDonald's



DELIVERY CARRY OUT











سرديات بصرية

بعض من مظاهر التحولات العمرانية تم توثيقها فوتوغرافيا.

Closing

Together these visual and oral narratives provide a glimpse of the past, capture the present, and serve to inspire the future. While residents and visitors may have found it easier to look back nostalgically at how it once was, it is a reminder that looking forward is just as important to be able to envision, plan and implement measures which can transform the city sustainably.



Mohandeseen
Lebanon Street

Mohandeseen
Aswan Square

Zamalek
Abou El Feda Street

Zamalek
Ismael Mohammed Street

Zamalek
26th of July Street



[m] 500

Source: Google Earth 7.1.8 (10.02.2018). Cairo. 30°03'13.46"N, 31°12'41.85"E, elevation 0M. DigitalGlobe. Viewed 03.12.2008.

الافتتاحية

القاهرة، مثل العديد من المدن الكبرى الأخرى، شهدت تحولات عدة على مدار تاريخها الطويل. فعلى الرغم من بقاء بعض الآثار التي تعود إلى عهود سابقة، أهمها أهرامات الجيزة، إلا أن الكثير من أوجه المدينة الأصلية قد اختفى. فالواقع العمراني الحالي للقاهرة المتسم بالكثافة العالية وطغيان المباني المغطاة بطبقة من الغبار وانتشار المشكلات البيئية يصعب معه تخيل أن قلب القاهرة التاريخي كان محاطا بالأراضي الخصبة الخضراء والبحيرات فقط منذ قرن مضى.

تعتبر القاهرة أكبر المدن المليونية في أفريقيا، وهي في تحول مستمر سواء بشكل رسمي أو غير رسمي: في إطار جهود توجيه هذه التحولات وتحجيم النمو اللارسمي على ما تبقى من الأرض الخصبة، قامت الجهات الحكومية بتخطيط وتمويل عدد من المدن الجديدة التي تم بناؤها وسكنها. إلا أنه في نفس الوقت، حلت الأبراج مكان الفيلات ذات الطابع الفاخر في المناطق الرسمية بقلب المدينة مثل الزمالك والمهندسين. أدى هذا التحول في الزمالك إلى هروب الكثير من سكان الطبقة العليا إلى السكن في المدن الصحراوية الجديدة تاركين العمران للتداعى. أما المهندسين فتحولوا قد أدى إلى أنها أصبحت أعلى المناطق سعرا في المدينة واختفاء ملامح المدينة الحداثية التي كانت تحكم تخطيط هذه المنطقة عند نشأتها. وعلى الرغم من الاحتياج الشديد للاهتمام بتطوير المناطق اللارسمية وتنمية المدن الصحراوية، إلا أنه من المهم أيضا التعلم من الماضي لتوجيه التحولات المستقبلية لمناطق قلب المدينة مثل الزمالك والمهندسين. الجزء التالي يبحث في التحولات بمناطق مختارة بمنطقة المهندسين حول شارع لبنان وميدان أسوان، بالإضافة إلى مناطق مختارة بالزمالك شمال نادي الجزيرة الرياضي.

مايا دينلسون - جونتان فيجنولا - ولفجانج ديكهاوت - جيلونا هافريكو

التحولات العمرانية للقاهرة سرديات الزمالك والمهندسين

This publication was developed as part of the workshop *Cairo's Urban Transformation*, which took place in Cairo in November 2018 as part of a three year collaboration between the Cairo University and the HafenCity University, funded by the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) program Higher Education Dialogue with the Muslim World.

Workshop Team:

Prof. Dr. Sahar Attia, Cairo University

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Wolfgang Dickhaut, HafenCity University Hamburg

M.Sc. REAP Maya Donelson, HafenCity University Hamburg

Dr. Sherin Gammaz, Cairo University

M. Sc. Arch. Xhelona Haveriku, HafenCity University Hamburg

Prof. Dr. Heba Allah E. Khalil, Cairo University

Dipl.-Ing. Sonja Schlipf, HafenCity University Hamburg

M.Sc. REAP Gionatan Vignola, HafenCity University Hamburg

HCU | HafenCity Universität
Hamburg



DAAD



Higher Education Dialogue
with the Muslim World

مايا دينلسون - جونتان فيجنولا - ولفجانج ديكهاوت - جيلونا هافريكو

التحولات العمرانية للقاهرة سرديات الزمالك والمهندسين

