



LIVING IN THE CITY OF THE DEAD

CAIRO CITY

In a central area of Cairo city there is one of the largest and most ancient islamic necropolis existing in the world and called al Qarafa or al Magabar. A place of cultural interest and final destination of pilgrimages since the Xth century. There, among tombs, monuments, schools, and mosques, refugees, rural immigrants, poor and homeless people found asylum since the end of the XIXth century. Today in the so called "city of the dead" about six hundred thousands people live, making this way the Cairo cemetery the fourth slum existing in the world. Although it is now spread the development of informal residences, the most of the inhabitants live inside the hosh (chapel and funeral borders): in some cases they illegally occupy the tombs, but it often happens that illegal residents and legal owners agree in an informal way recognising to the firestones the role of hosh's guardians. A many part of those living in the cemetery carry out a task concerning the funeral rituals (responsible of the cult, gravediggers, funeral home workers, Corano's prayers, gravers etc.); others find part-time or occasional jobs out of the place, in small factories or shops. The lack of local recognition of the social and architectural value of the City of the Dead on one side gives right to the endemic state of environmental abandoning and, on the other side, a series of Programmes of urban "regeneration" which are menacing the demolition of wide sectors of the necropolis.

JULY 7th - 9th 2009

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

Politecnico di Milano - Department of Architecture and Planning
International Cooperation for Development Laboratory

SCIENTIFIC COORDINATION:

Dott.ssa P. Bellaviti - POLITECNICO DI MILANO

Prof. A. Tosi - POLITECNICO DI MILANO

Prof. A. Ashour - AIN SHAMS UNIVERSITY OF CAIRO

TUESDAY 7th: 9.00 to 13.00 - Conference Hall, via Golgi 39
Research Groups cooperation meeting

WEDNESDAY 8th: 9.00 to 18.00 - Conference Hall, via Golgi 39
Research Groups cooperation meeting

THURSDAY 9th: 9.00 to 13.00 - Aula Gamma, via Ampere 2
Cairo: transformations, urban policies, projects seminar

PARTICIPANTS:

Prof.ssa P. Gabellini; Prof. A. Petrillo; Prof.ssa M. Sclavi; Dott.ssa A. Nufrio;

M. Barriero Cruz; F. Chiodelli; M. Falletti; G. Fini; H. Nour; L. Salvetti;

G. Berni; A. Colli; M.L. Daglia; L.F. Garibaldo; C. La Mantia;

E. Lazzarino; S. Orazi; S. Sambati; A. Tozzi Di Marco; S. Trianni;



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