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Culture and Informal Urban Settlement -The Case of Cairo's Ashwan Eyat

Cairo informal settlements or 'ashwa'eyat (meaning haphazard) are the product of rapid uncontrolled urbanization witnessed in recent decades. Cairo's 'ashwa'eyat largely ignored by the former neoliberal state regime are frequently the only option for the rural migrants and the Cairo urban poor to fulfill their housing need. Since informal urban processes are strongly influenced and shaped by the residents, it is paramount to study their culture in relation to informality and urban space.

Culture is the complex set of values and controlling mechanisms that govern behaviors. Dismantling culture is a key for resolving its complexity. The research question is: How do different cultural factors interact with the urban physical characteristics to influence Cairo's 'ashwa'eyat development to form "informality"?



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