
In-person presentation

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This research aims at exploring the architecture and spatial organization of mass housing in Baghdad under different political systems with an emphasis on recent housing typology in the urban scenery of Baghdad, known globally as gated communities, in connection with recent neoliberal shift in housing provision. Although neoliberal housing approach in Iraq is addressed in the current scholarly work, recent mass housing typologies that have resulted from this approach are understudied. This research aims at fulfilling this gap in the body of knowledge and therefore, it has the potential of identifying the possible socio-spatial impact of recent walled and gated mass housing typology in Baghdad.

In order to track down and decode the context of this urban phenomenon, the methodological approach will rely on a chronological analysis starting from the beginning of housing programs in the 1950s until the present time. It is divided into 4 phases. Each phase covers major transformations of design values and spatial
characteristics of mass housing development that correspond to changes in political and economic agendas in Iraq. A case study is chosen from each phase in order to identify the socio-spatial characteristics that make mass housing distinct as a typology. The theoretical framework of this research employs a discourse on contemporary literature regarding the theory and practice of gated communities.

Findings from a comparison of mass housing under different regimes throughout the researched chronological segments designate a number of similarities and differences. Housing development has been used by the various political regimes in Iraq as a tool to project certain images that deliver multivalent-level meanings.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Samah is a fourth-year PhD student in architecture at the University of Cincinnati, college of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning (DAAP). Her doctoral dissertation is concerned with contemporary mass housing development in Iraq and the socio-economic and political contexts that surround it. Before she joined the PhD program at UC, she worked as an assistant lecturer at the department of Architecture at Al-Nahrain University from which she earned her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in architecture. She also worked as an architect at the department of Engineering Projects at the same university. In addition to her fulltime job at Al-Nahrain University, she participated in designing and drafting several projects including residential and commercial projects.