

1 What I felt at the workshop

(Naoko FUKAMI)

3 It is very important to listen to the voice of the residents or community about the future of the city. Because it is the  
4 people who spend their days there who are most familiar with the atmosphere of the street, its breath and the  
5 buildings that line it. They are the key to making the street better or worse.

6 What can we do to make our everyday places a little better? Of course, there is a need for government and public  
7 projects and subsidies, but it is also important for others like us to voice our opinions and share our accumulated  
8 wisdom, but the most important way to ensure the future of the city is for residents to become aware of the quality  
9 of their place and be proud of it. I believe that this is one of the most important ways to guarantee the future of the  
10 city.

11 It was very encouraging to attend this workshop and to see the positive attitude of the participants towards the city  
12 and the reuse of its historic buildings. The fact that they are aware of the problems that exist is the basis for the  
13 improvement of Souq al-Silah. We were also relieved that no one said they didn't want any of the six historic  
14 buildings and that everyone wanted to restore them and use them as a place for everyone. In addition, the women  
15 were happy to talk about putting in a place for community, which is not in the current Souq al-Silah and is necessary  
16 for their lives. The men, on the other hand, focused on the fundamental issues and debated them passionately. We  
17 felt it was good that the workshop was held separately for men and women. Compared to us Japanese, who tend  
18 to keep our mouths shut, the people of Souq al-Silah are really good at expressing their opinions clearly.

19 Furthermore, the power of Prof. Salah and Prof. Alaa as facilitators and the architects, is beyond imagination. They  
20 were the ones who were able to connect with the residents and get their opinions out. We were also indebted to  
21 the interpreters. Thanks to everyone.

22 One thing that struck me was the attitude of the residents towards tourism. There was a opinion to make it more  
23 like Muiz Street. However, I feel that Muiz Street lacks a sense of life, although if you go one step further into the  
24 city, it is just as bustling as Souq al-Silah. Tourism in Souq al-Silah will be an important issue. Though, I would like to  
25 see a different direction from Muiz Street, where tourists can have a dialogue with the community and not just  
26 enjoy the old buildings.

27 We believe that the continuation of these workshops is important to maintain residents' awareness of the city's  
28 streets and historic architecture. At the same time, a major challenge will be how to implement projects that have  
29 taken into account the opinions of the residents. Although large sums of money are needed for the realization of  
30 projects, we believe that the problems of rubbish and morality, for example, can be improved by the close attention  
31 and awareness of the residents.

32 I am studying the architectural culture which was created by the Islamic civilisation in Japan, in the east of Asia, and  
33 every time I visit the historical architecture of Souq al-Silah, I feel envious of the people who live here with plenty  
34 of monument. Perhaps the residents don't realise it because they are so close, but each of the six buildings has its  
35 own special beauty and the intricate detailing of them. The magnificent stonework ceiling of Manjak Silahdar's  
36 Palace is unparalleled, the distinctive capitals of Sabil Kuttab of Ilgay Yousfi told its construction unravel the history  
37 of the Mamluk dynasty, the geometric arrangement of the beautiful red Iznik tiles of Sabil Sinan Paşa, Sabil Kuttab  
38 Ruqayyah Dudu is like a jewel box of pearls; imagine how pleasant it must be to enter a traditional hammam through  
39 the coloured marble entrance of Hammam Baştak; and Hassan Agha Kokarian is a fitting entrance to the Bait Yakan,  
40 a place of community. I dream of the day when these wonderful monuments will actually be put to good use by  
41 their inhabitants.

(Takeo MURAJI)

■ What I felt at the residents' workshop (women) on the first day

I felt that the workshop turned out to be a very good one, despite the difficulties of dealing with three languages (Arabic, English, and Japanese) and the fact that it was online. I felt that Ms. Alaa and Ms. Salah were able to grasp the intention of the Japanese side to introduce community development with the participation of local residents, and convey their thoughts on the renewal of Souq al-Silah to the participants. The group discussion felt very much like a conversation. In the presentation, Mr. Salah and the residents presented together, and I felt the collaboration between the experts (architects) and the residents. What was interesting was that Manjak Silahdar Palace was not only used for tourism, but also for children, with a park gate for children, an open theater for children, etc. In addition, there were proposals for a beauty salon in Hammam Bashtak and a handicraft exhibition in Sabil. The entire Souq al-Silah is considered as an open museum, not only for tourism, but also for education and culture, such as books, cultural use for the elderly, and a school for learning the Quran.

■ What I felt at the residents' workshop (male) on the second day

Although the start of the workshop was delayed due to a power outage, it was good to have Mr. Fukami's talk on the six historical buildings and the comments from the Japanese side after residents' presentation, which we were not able to do on the first day, because it made the whole thing more coherent. In other words, we were able to have a discussion after conveying the value of Islamic architecture as seen by Japanese experts, and the residents were able to hear an objective evaluation from the Japanese side. In the group discussions viewed from the computer, I felt that heated discussions were being held. What was interesting in the presentations was that the issues of car congestion and deterioration of the surrounding buildings were discussed, and the residents passionately stated that they needed to know the advantages of this city. In response to this, comments from the Japanese side included the importance of sharing problems by discussing them with residents, the introduction of crowdfunding by Dr. Nuno, and the introduction of a pamphlet on the history of the city created by residents themselves in Kawagoe by Mr. Aramaki. I think this was one of the meaningful outcomes of this workshop.

■ Opinions and suggestions on the renewal plan

I would like to see a good blend of the residents' ideas and the thoughts of the experts, Mr. Aller and Mr. Salah. In the past, Mr. Aller mentioned the need for a place to display woodworking products, a museum, and an office, which were not included in the workshop proposal. I hope that the idea will be included in the renewal plan.

(Syuji FUNO)

I wasn't able to participate in the discussion itself, but looking at the various suggestions of the participants put together by the facilitator, I think they contain a lot of great suggestions, despite discussion in a short time. I think the problem is how to realize various ideas. In the process of realizing a wonderful proposal, it is necessary to reach consensus among the residents of the district, and it is necessary to coordinate with various laws, systems and administrative authorities. And above all, you need a fund.

First of all, I would like to propose to create a loose organization that will continue to hold workshops like this one, including residents, experts, and administrative authorities. And I think it's a good idea to start with the smallest things you can do. In addition, I think it would be good to disseminate specific activities to the world, interact with people from other regions who have common problems, and learn from each other's experiences. I participated online this time, and I think it will be a great stimulus for Japanese town development. It was

When it comes to funds, Islam also has a Waqf tradition. I think there is a possibility of crowdfunding in recent years. In order to expect commercialization by the national and administrative authorities, I think it is necessary to have an attitude of accumulating small achievements.

1. The active and varied exchange of opinions by participating residents on the improvement of their own town, whether their cultural assets are tangible or intangible, was extremely impressive and exceeded our expectations. At the same time, it has been understood that they are fully aware of the history of the town where they live and of its cultural heritage.
2. and healthy lives could be guaranteed for children, and there was also seen the attitude of women who tried to positively relate to the future of the town. Mr. Alaa likened women to the pillars of the town in his speech, but I realized that it wasn't just lip service.
3. The report presented by the male group conveyed the pride that they were fully aware of the town's historical atmosphere and townscapes. In addition, rather than utilizing each monument, I was impressed by the opinion of valuing the intimacy between residents and the intangible traditions such as technical arts and crafts.
4. If there had been no such system to understand the will of residents, the attempt of this workshop would have been a valuable step for the future town development. I believe that the significance of this project would not be small at all if we could push them somewhat while they are deeply related to the preservation and utilization of the town today and to the building-up of the more livable community as heritage that they share.
5. We need to keep an up-to-date look at the town based on what its Outstanding Universal Value is, since the district came into the World Heritage area of Historic Cairo designated in 1979. The UNESCO World Heritage Committee has repeatedly recommended improvements to its imperfect conservation, and the 2021 committee resolution expresses concern that even a map of the scope of inscription has not yet been completed, and that the entire town is deteriorating more than individual buildings, and that it is likely to reach an irreversible situation. This seems to be of a serious situation for Historic Cairo, but the measure concept of the town renovation doesn't mean clinging to a World Heritage site as is common in some other world. I believe that the town they want is the direction of maintaining the World Heritage brand.

There was a lot of similarity in the opinions among the four groups, Group A and Group B with two genders, on the use of the six historic buildings. This similarity suggests the existence of a common understanding that can gain the support of many residents in the area.

On the other hand, the opinions such as the use of Manjak Silahdar Palace top floor as a restaurant; and providing a nursery and beauty salon Hammam Bashtak were also interesting. These opinions suggest the importance of economic and social value, which are the basis for sustainable operation for the restored historic building.

It is easy to say "use as a tourist attraction," but tourism cannot be possible without a link to the tourist markets and high-quality continuous operation. It is necessary to recognize that the restored historic buildings with only the technical aspects will quickly stagnate business. Without proper content and qualified human resources, it won't function as intended, even for a tourist information center. Creating a value chain inside and outside the community is necessary to enable stable management and operation.



It is also worth noting the opinion to ban tuk-tuk and cars, although it is not easy to apply in practice. There are similar cases in the world, such as Venice in Italy and Zermatt in Switzerland. Electric carts have also been introduced at the Petra archaeological park in Jordan. However, the idea of creating underground parking may destroy the buried cultural heritage, so caution is required. There was no discussion at the workshop, but introducing digital technology as an extension of the same direction may be worth thinking. By introducing IoT and 5G communication, it will be possible to help residents carry in and out goods and products by self-driving electric carts and robots and move residents to car parking. By superimposing a special digital technology zone on a historic block, the economic and social value of the district can be enhanced. Antennas that pose a problem in the landscape can be solved by incorporating them into the minaret.



## Impressions about this workshop

(Sumikazu Aramaki)

●I was impressed by the fact that all the participants, male and female, were actively speaking up. In Japan, when workshops like this are held, there is usually one or two bystanders.

It was nice to have a separate forum for men and women to discuss the issues from their respective perspectives. It will be important to reconcile the two sides in the future.

●It was encouraging to see that the participants had a good understanding of the history of the six historical assets that were specifically discussed this time, and their position in the town. I thought it was very desirable that the need for restoration was discussed. In addition, there were active discussions on how to use the building in accordance with its historical use and new proposals, which I thought was also a desirable direction.

●In the process of discussing how to use the building, I think it became clear to the residents what facilities and functions are lacking in this area. I felt that there was a particular need for a place for women and a place for children. There also seems to be a desire for a facility where all the local crafts can be displayed and widely known.

●Through this workshop, I think it became clear that what the residents were thinking and thinking as individuals, other people were also thinking and thinking in the same way.

●One of the comments that caught my attention was when a man talked about the need to know the region. The place where you were born and raised is a natural space. The good things are so obvious that they do not come to our consciousness. Even the bad things, we just enjoy them as they are. The people who continue to live in the area seem to understand this, but they do not. This may be the same in all regions of the world.

My suggestion is to have the workshop participants walk around the town and look for the good points (and problems) of the town. Unlike walking alone, you will be able to re-discover the town from various perspectives. Then, make maps and pamphlets. Include the history and culture of the area. To let local people and visitors know more about the charm of the town that they may know but don't know. By getting to know the community, people will feel attached to it. I think it is important to create a sense of wanting to be involved in the development of the town to make it better so that people can continue to live there.

●One of the things that I am concerned about is the way the community is perceived. One of the things I was curious about was how the workshop participants perceived the area where they would work together to develop the town.

Another thing I was curious about was the position of the workshop participants in the community. I was also curious about the position of the workshop participants in the community. What is the position of the participants for the people living in the area where this urban development is going on?

●I would like to ask you to devise a way to make the discussions of this workshop a shared experience for the community. For example, we can make a simple newspaper and distribute it. Also, let's implement what we can do immediately from the opinions in this workshop. Even if it is something simple. The results of our discussions will motivate us to move on.

(Hiroyuki KASHIWAGI)

A comprehensive basic survey of the buildings around Souq al-Silah was carried out with young Egyptian architects on four occasions to determine the estimated date of construction, structure, number of floors, current use, location of entrances and exits, etc. Many of the buildings were built after the 1950s and many of them are modern structures with reinforced concrete columns, floors and fired brick walls. There were also many empty stores with shutters still closed.

Most of the old buildings, which should be called historical Islamic architecture, were in ruins, except for a few examples such as mosques still in use. Some of the residents cited the 1992 Cairo earthquake as a reason for this, and some of the structures were left in a state of emergency. It was assumed that the building was originally constructed with an upper floor, as many historical buildings have been found to have brackets, but now it has collapsed and only the walls of the first floor remain. Some of them were used as workshops or warehouses, but many of them were illegally dumped with garbage, causing deterioration of the sanitary environment. These remains are scheduled to be dismantled and removed by the government, and many of the residents support this plan. However, despite the alarming situation, it is feared that the loss of the remains will lead to the dilution of the historicity of the area. Therefore, instead of simply demolishing the buildings, it is desirable to first collect the garbage, reconsider them as historical buildings, and find some way to utilize them while buying time to reevaluate them.

In general, in areas where townscape preservation is being sought, there are many cases where capital was invested intensively in a relatively short period of time, and the framework of the townscape was built to a high degree of perfection, and future generations only had to maintain it. Conversely, the preservation of the townscape is a result of the difficulty of maintaining it. The same is true of the area around Souq al-Silah, where the mosque and its surroundings are presumed to have been a group of low-rise dwellings made of limestone masonry, but nowadays there are cases where multiple floors have been added on top of the low-rise floors, presenting a complex scenery. There are also many modern RC buildings, so it is not easy to restore the landscape of the past. The first issue is how to maintain and connect the historical remains scattered around.

In Egypt today, heavy machinery is roaring and the country is being actively developed. This situation overlaps with the bubble economy of Japan in the past, and it is difficult for people to understand the proposal to maintain old buildings in such a climate. However, the bubble is sure to burst someday. As a country that lost so much of its history to the bubble economy, we need to persistently convey the message that maintaining the status quo is not a backward step.

This time, we held a meeting to exchange opinions with the surrounding residents. I was reminded of the saying that the best meetings are the ones that strangers think are just a fight. At the same time, I was honestly surprised by the residents' deep love for the area, accurate understanding of historical buildings, and strong interest in utilizing them. On the other hand, I was concerned that there were not many local craftsmen among the participants. The area around Souq al-Silah is a town where people work and live together, and there is a large percentage of traditional woodworkers, especially those who make furniture and inter-columnar devices. In order to sustainably develop as a woodworking town, it is essential to improve and enhance not only the housing but also the work environment. This is a major issue for the future.



### Impressions of the Workshop

Over the course of two days, local residents actively discussed how they would like to improve their lives in the area by making effective use of the six historical buildings scattered along Souk Silaha Street. Two architects who have been involved in the area for a long time served as facilitators, and I feel that the residents were able to share their ideas in a limited time (Photo⑧). Personally, as a bath enthusiast, I was happy to hear that people wanted to restore the hammam as a place for local residents to interact.

Although the number of participants was limited to adults, what impressed me was that the participants understood the historical value of the area and were concerned about the landscape and safety of the city. There are many issues that need to be addressed, such as how to deal with abandoned buildings and buildings that have partially collapsed due to earthquakes, how to deal with littering, and the dangers of traffic in the narrow district. I've taken a look around the entire area beforehand and found that there were some urgent issues scattered throughout. This is where ideas that transcend the boundaries between the public and private sectors are required.

After spending the two days, I realized that there are many adjustments to be made, such as securing a budget and clarifying the boundaries of responsibility, but I also felt that it would be a good idea to restore the Manjak Silahdar Palace and the Hammam Bashtaq and use them in a new form as a symbolic starting point for the revitalization of the region. Both of these buildings are in a state of severe deterioration, and it would be desirable to take action as soon as possible. If the new buildings can bring new life to the area, they will be loved as much as the Beit Yakan, and could be a stepping stone to the development of the area. Depending on the use of the building, it could also be used by tourists, which would naturally attract more attention, and thus improve the city culturally.

In addition to the above, I would like to mention a few things that I found particularly interesting in my limited knowledge.

A building in which people live might collapse soon. Early intervention by the government is necessary. In the following photo①, the top of an apartment building has collapsed on the apartment building across the street.

There is an urgent need to determine how to handle abandoned buildings and to reinforce them as necessary before they collapse. (Photo②③)

Littering of garbage is conspicuous. As with tuk-tuks, it is a difficult problem how to instill public rules and discipline in social life. (Photo④,⑤,⑥,⑦)



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