

البحث الأول

Towards New Entrances for Low-income Housing Units in Egypt: Integrating Ideas from Traditional *Magaz* and Japanese *Genkan*

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The present study is a part of a broader research that aims at finding new designs for low-income housing units in Egypt. It focuses, however, on issues related to the entrance zone only and is not concerned with the rest of the unit, though examines its relation with them. Many scholars are calling for the revival of the *magaz*, the traditional indirect entrance in Islamic Cairene Houses because it provided privacy and protected from dust and wind. However, they offered no concrete solutions on how to realize such goal in such tiny housing units. The opportunity to perform research in Japan has introduced me to the traditional Japanese entrances called *genkan*. In Japan, *genkan* plays an important role; so important that it has successfully maintained its existence until today; even the smallest residences (30 m² - 50 m²) have provided a part of its area for it. The aim of this paper is to offer ideas related to the entrance zone that better fulfill the social needs of families living in small scale, low income housing units in Egypt by integrating ideas from the traditional Islamic *magaz* and traditional Japanese *genkan*. In order to realize such goal, the paper first explains why relying solely on the designs of the traditional *magaz* is an approach that is both fanciful and incomplete. Then discusses why ideas from Japanese *genkan* can be beneficially applied to housing units in Egypt. Third, observes the Islamic *magaz*: its etymology, historical appearance, functions and design. Fourth, observes the Japanese *genkan*: its etymology, historical appearance, functions and design. Finally, discusses ideas and proposals on how to improve the entrance zone in Egypt housing units.