

Preface

Self-built houses are inseparable parts of urban built environment. Mostly prevalent in the developing part of the world, they are often ignored by researchers. However, due to its bulk, they have been attracting recent researchers around the world. Often accused of creating unhealthy urban development, they catch the observers' eyes for the wrong reasons. However, a closer look and sensitive investigation can bring up a different picture. This book is such an attempt. Beginning with some contextual description of the neighborhoods with respect to the city of Dhaka, Bangladesh, it focused on a particular phenomenon of spontaneous transformation, which due to its particular nature can be regarded as a dominant identity of these houses. First, it tried to categorize the otherwise random looking incidents of transformation. Later, it explored the behavioral patterns of such categories. By doing so, it tried to represent these houses not only just as a static element, but also as a dynamic element in time, which passes through different stages of aging just as human beings. With the experience of living in these houses for a major part of my life, and using my professional knowledge as an architect as well as my lifelong experience in academics and research, I tried to unfold them as characters in human life; sensual and alive.

Skudai, Malaysia, 2013

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Living with Transformation

Self-Built Housing in the City of Dhaka

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2014, XIII, 93 p. 60 illus., 21 illus. in color., Softcover

ISBN: 978-3-319-00719-9