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**Architecture in Between: Social Change and Happiness
Ali Al-Thahab**

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Abstract

As architecture relates to community culture and social values, highness or degradation of latter aspects and the impact of their variables on society affect greatly the quality of domestic comfort as an influential factor in human lifestyles, wellbeing, and happiness. Incentives or stimuli producing individual and collective happiness on the scale of home architecture and urban life are intrinsically related to many intimate values and beliefs of, precisely, social cohesion, interaction, respect for family privacy, status of women and the opportunity of encounter and mutual assistance, among others. With the support of a strong communal socio-political system, traditional societies produced a specific form of urban structure and socio-spatial organisation, which, for successive centuries, had succeeded in creating an ideal context in which individual and collective happiness were their main issue. In a time of social change, cross-temporal analyses of the transformations of happiness concept in the architecture of urban living in twentieth century Iraq explore to what extent traditional or contemporary urban living contributes to achieving happiness. As internal feelings or states of contentment, happiness reveals one of the most contested issues when it comes to poverty criterion, the quality of building materials or technological developments employed, and others. Based on previous discussion, objective analysis of happiness concept and linking it with home architecture, in-depth interviews with residents and users, photographs, archival records as well as socio-spatial perception of both contexts to reveal tangible and intangible relations with happiness are many of the analytical tools adopted in this study. Results will show whether exaggerated contemporary house forms in terms of mass and technical manifestation or traditional structured socio-spatial system based on inherited traditions and practices are most relevant and contributing to happiness concept or the creation of happy homes and thus a happy community.

***Full Paper awaiting publication**