

**A Symbiotic Relation of Cooperative Social Housing
and Dispersed Tourism in Havana Vieja: Development model and architectural prototypes.**

Abstract

It is common knowledge that Cuba's inhabitants struggle with huge daily-life challenges. One of the biggest problems is the housing-shortage, with up to 30% of the society awaiting housing provision (Rodriguez, 2014). They are not literally homeless as Cuba has adhered to a community system of governance and grants housing by accommodating people mostly into existing, often extremely overcrowded houses with even four generations of families living in two-room apartments (Rodriguez, 2014). Havana, and especially its Old Town (Havana Vieja), struggles with extremely high levels of deterioration of its urban fabric and houses. In 1990, two collapses of buildings were recorded by UNESCO every three days (PDHL, 2000). The housing market is in clear crisis on both an economic and a social level. On the other hand, a very dynamically growing part of Cuba's economy is tourism (Peters, 2002). To decrease the pressure of hotel demand on the national government sector and implementing a subtle change in dealing with entrepreneurship to regenerate the city, Cubans are now allowed to rent rooms to tourists. Since 2010, the government introduced an updated bill, allowing individuals to move from a national-employment to self-employed sector choosing from a list of 181 permitted professions. This paper explores the development of an alternative growth model for urban and social resilience to regenerate the city-center of Havana. It is based on a research-stay, interacting with local actors next to data-mining. This paper is the result of a search for development-patterns combining solutions addressing the housing shortage through integration of small scale tourism entrepreneurship within it and proposing architectural prototypes to implement the model. The proposal seeks to deal with the urban, economic and social aspects of the productive and regenerative city, empowering the local community, to obtain the necessary tools to face the challenging future of Havana and its inhabitants.

Keywords: Havana Vieja, dispersed tourism, housing shortage, research-by-design, development model, new models of productivity.