

Pluralism in Contemporary Arabic Architecture: The Conflict between Belonging and Movements of Change

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□ ABSTRACT □

Modern Arabic architecture has been facing important challenges imposed in many fields by changes occurring internationally and in the West, especially in terms of architecture. The effect of these changes on the visual appearance of the city has been clearly evident, with everything this entails in terms of formation and architectural samples. This was due to a group of internal and external effects which contributed to accelerating the spread of intellectual theoretical movements and new architectural philosophies which differed in how they responded to local data.

This really problematic trend in modern Arabic architecture became apparent and manifested itself by achieving balance and integration between originality and tradition on the one hand, and modernism and contemporariness on the other. The number of frames available to the Arabic architect became more numerous, to include rejection, advocacy and reformation, and this was reflected in the architectural formations which became multiple and were characterized by pluralism. This led to the loss of their local identity and to a contradiction between their visual and formative modes. A number of Arab architects became aware of this problem at the end of the 20th century, so they analyzed its causes and its transformative mechanism. Attempts were started to find logical and rational solutions to guarantee harmony between technical and scientific development on the one hand, and a sense of belonging to the place on the other.

Keywords: Contemporary Arabic architecture, architectural thought, 20th century

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التعددية في العمارة العربية المعاصرة ، صراع بين الانتماء والنزعات التغييرية

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□ ملخص □

تعرضت العمارة العربية المعاصرة إلى تحديات هامة، فرضتها طبيعة التغيرات العالمية الغربية في كافة المجالات وخاصة المعماري منها، فظهر تأثيرها بشكل واضح في تغيير الصورة البصرية للمدينة، بما تحتويه من تكوينات ونماذج معمارية، وذلك بفعل مجموعة من المؤثرات الخارجية والداخلية التي ساهمت في تسريع دخول اتجاهات نظرية فكرية وفلسفات معمارية جديدة، اختلفت في استجابتها للمعطيات المحلية.

ظهرت الإشكالية الحقيقية للعمارة العربية المعاصرة وتجلت في تحقيق التوازن و التكامل بين الأصالة و التقليدية من جهة، والحداثة والمعاصرة من جهة أخرى، فتعددت الأطر الفكرية للمعمار العربي بين رفض و تأييد و إصلاح، وانعكس ذلك على التكوينات المعمارية، فاتسمت أيضاً بالتعددية مما أدى إلى ضياع هويتها المحلية و تناقض صيغها التكوينية والبصرية .

بدأ الوعي لهذه الإشكالية بين بعض المعماريين العرب في نهاية القرن العشرين ، فعمدوا إلى تحليل مسبباتها وآلية تحولها، وبدأت المحاولات لإيجاد حلول منطقية وعقلانية تؤمن التوافق بين التقنية والتطور العلمي من جهة، والانتماء للمكان من جهة أخرى .

الكلمات المفتاحية: العمارة العربية المعاصرة ، الفكر المعماري ، القرن العشرين

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Introduction:

In the second half of the 20th century, architecture in the Arab region was influenced by the global architectural movement and by the prospects of change and pluralism it had brought to the creation of the Arab architectural product. This influence was embodied in huge and clear transformations, forming a visual and architectural revolution in Arab architecture and a stark contradiction in the balance between the need for increasingly rapid urban growth and the absence of local Arab architectural schools. This led to a definitive split between Arab architectural modernism and the language of traditional local architecture. This influence had its reasons, effects and important factors such as political, social, economic and cultural stability.

■Importance and objectives of the research:

Western architectural thought was understood in multiple ways in the Arab world, was and its ways of affecting the general method of Arab architecture differed too, in its formalism and formative formulation, thus its directions applied types were pluralized and alternated between positivism and negativism in terms of its suitability to the local environment.

The real problematic of modern Arabic architecture became apparent and manifested itself by achieving balance and integration between originality and tradition on the one hand, and modernism and contemporariness on the other which we can put it in these main objectives:

-main goal: study The Effect of Intellectual Pluralism on Forming Contemporary Arab Architecture .

-Progress goal :

1. Analyze The Problem of Transformation in Contemporary Arab Architecture, and the due to a group of internal and external effects which contributed to accelerating the spread of intellectual theoretical movements and new architectural philosophies which differed in how they responded to local data.

2. study The Architectural Product as a Result of Pluralist Behaviors and the Movement of Change

the **main problem** in contemporary Arab architecture is as a continuous argumentative relationship – on the whole not successful – to secure balance and harmony between place belonging and traditional local original architecture on the one hand, modernism and its geographical relation with the place which it belongs to on the other hand¹, and its disregard for society and how it is being transformed, and the necessity of it reacting well with the already existing architecture. This is what kept architects in a continual search for appropriate, balanced formal architectural language and formula, in order to avoid the foundering of the problematic of searching for identity or what is known as the problematic of contemporariness and originality.

¹. Thinkers including architects are facing a couple of intellectual cases which differ relatively from one country to another. This is resembled in reaching a suitable balance between modernism demand and the demand of heritage, reading the heritage in a modern perspective and reorganizing the past symbols to unify them and to keep the continuous elements values and to reject the fake values, also how to deal with integration and dissociation forces in society . Enabling the huge crowds from unifying with the group spirit resulting from the total culture, detecting the priorities of developing efforts , protecting the balance between "Choices" and "connections.

Look , SYRAJ ALDEEN Ismail , Towards an Extended Concept of Critical Architecture , Issues for the second decade from the works of Aha Khan for Architecture , detailed brief 5th of June 1986.

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▪Methodology and material:

The analytical method used to achieve the objectives of the research through and discussed during the three-ideas describes the subject matter in all its details and legibility and the research discussing the following points:

- 1- Intellectual Pluralism and Transformations of Thought in International Architecture.
- 2- analyze The Effect of International Architectural Intellectual transformations on laying the foundations for the practicability of Pluralism and the Transformative Movement in the Arabic Architecture.
- 3- The Effect of Intellectual Pluralism on Forming Contemporary Arab Architecture in the light of Belonging to a Space and the Need for Change.

▪Results and discussion:

1- Intellectual Pluralism and Transformations of Thought in International Architecture

The development of the concept of architecture started at the beginning of the 20th century in the West, in line with the concepts produced by western architectural theories. They were connected strongly to their societies, thus their formation process came as an unavoidable byproduct of the reaction between necessity, technology and industrial development and the developments in science, philosophy and thought in general which accompanied this..²

These movements gained a clear conceptualization and they formed the architectural phenomenon that actually affected the course of global architecture. Their architectural styles were distinguished by freedom, creativity and innovation. Their effect spread to reach the Arab region, it was clearly reflected in the formulation of their architectural formations, so it changed the existing built environment and the figurative formula of Arab architecture, too.

2- The Effect of International Architectural Intellectual transformations on laying the foundations for the practicability of Pluralism and the Transformative Movement in the Arabic Architecture:

In order to understand the foundations of periodic transformation in contemporary Arab architecture, we must identify the problem and the mechanism of the transformation happening, and the stages it is made up of. We can analyze it as follows in the next section.

2-1 The Problem of Transformation in Contemporary Arab Architecture

Until the 19th century, Arab architecture was characterized as a local architecture that was in keeping with its environment and the society and religion of the region, responded to the various needs of society,. Then afterwards, it was affected by the international architectural movement and the changes in thought which followed it. This effect was reflected in the general formation structure of contemporary Arab architecture, especially in the second half of the 20th century.

. At the same time, the western architectural movement was continuing its development in terms of theoretical thought, techniques and construction materials. We can identify the **transformation problematic** in contemporary Arab architecture by understanding these two main points:

² as-Sulṭānī, Khaled (2007) : Tannāṣ mi‘ māri - AL Mada Publishing House, Damascus

2-1-1 The Transformation Mechanism in Arab Architecture up until the 19th Century:

The transformation mechanism in traditional Arab architecture was marked by **centralism** in cultural, social and ideological values which formed the main controller in forming its spaces, at a time when we witnessed how the mechanism of movement development in the western architecture was transformed according to a **continual line** mechanism which goes beyond the values and their effect in forming the architectural product.

The difference in the followed-up mechanism in thought and the transformations in architectural thought which followed it led to a standstill in Arab architectural formative styles, at a time when western architecture continued to produce an architecture that enjoys freedom of creativity and innovation in formative styles.³

2-1-2 Modes of Transformation in Contemporary Arab Architecture:

starting with **local** architecture using local materials and local talent. It soon failed to keep up with technological and technical developments and with contemporary building methods. These materials remained far from being developed, unable to respond to contemporary building demands, thus the problem was a result of the absence of natural resources and local construction materials, and reliance on imported materials like iron, concrete and glass. So, on the one hand contemporary Arab architecture seemed not to belong to local architecture, and on the other hand it did not achieve the highly technical construction which the West had been using.

The local movements changed to move towards regionalism, that imposed the uniformity of materials, elements and designs used, making it a positive phenomenon whose effects reached beyond the borders of western regions to include other regions divergent in terms of geography, culture and civilization, such as the Arab region. This is what contributed to creating the problem of identity in contemporary Arab architecture., thus giving birth to generalized architectural samples suitable for every place, in spite of the particularity and contrast of different local data which must be taken into consideration in contemporary Arab architecture.

Arab architecture failed to invent internal modernism on a new basis of local civilization. It wasn't a choice which emerged from the motivations of the history of the Arab region and its accumulating experience and thought – instead, it appeared to be an imitation of western modernism. This was what formed the dimension between spontaneous locality, the coming westernism and the emergence of an exile phenomenon which was the result of coming into contact with modernism and what followed it⁴.

2-2 Stages of the Transformation of Contemporary Arab Architecture

The Arab architectural movement has gone through a series of stages starting with the **stability** stage of traditional local architecture and the stability of its formative style, reaching the **conflict** stage with the modernity movement, which ended up with the transformation of modernism into **globalization** and continuity towards something endless.

If the transformations are reviewed in architectural thought starting at **the end of 19th century**, we will find that Arab architectural thought was marked by interference and

³ Abd Allah an-Na'im, Mashari (2005) : al-'imāra wa at-Thaqafa – Dirāsāt naqdiyya fī al-'imāra al-'arabiya al-mu'āshira.- Kitāb ar-rīyāḍ - Riyadh.

⁴This is what Muhammad ARKOUN has cleared from his total writings and philosophy from the basic Thoughts which can be concluded from the thinker Muhammad ARKOUN writings which say that we can't isolate Islamic culture, history and religion from modernism by a scientific scheming wall, because this forms a stumbling block in their developing way and it means that they are unable to go on with modernism and they have no ability in compatibility the existing reality..

direct contact with the West and consequently the reflection of its thought and ideology on the Arab intellectual and architectural structure. This openness caused can be called "**cultural shock**" and the outcome was a huge state of contrast between the technical and intellectual levels in the East and its parallels in the West, it caused what can be called the "**cultural gap**" which created a state of subordination towards its ideologies and architectural thought⁵.

The first half of the 20th century was marked by the appearance of thinkers and literary writers, and by the start of pluralism of intellectual movements from traditionalism to modernism in many fields such as the architectural movement. This stage is considered the beginning of the crystallization of the conflict between modernism and tradition (authentic style), which continued until the beginning of the second half of the 20th century. In the **1970s** a pluralism appeared in international architectural movements which emerged as a reaction to the architecture of the 1950s (international style) and this caused the appearance of "postmodernism" in architecture that calls for a return to the roots. Soon, this was reflected in a state of awareness and consciousness in the Arab region towards the importance of identity and heritage and their reflections on reality. So, it oriented itself towards what can be called alternative architecture, which came about as a reaction to the appearance of architectural modernity and the invasion of the international style of contemporary Arab architecture. It tried to add an Arab or local type to modern architecture and this launched what is called modern-traditionalism which was represented by visual traditionalism.⁶

We can also describe this period as a period marked by an architectural contradiction between tradition and the wish for modernism, in addition to its superiority when the crisis of the search for energy resources appeared or what is internationally referred to as the "oil boom" in the Gulf.

The period from the **late 20th century** up until now was marked by the fusion of the world in the melting pot of information, technical progress in the communications field, the emergence of globalization, and the reflection of globalization on all fields internationally, including contemporary Arab architecture. The absence of local intellectual critical schools and the consequent absence of any effect on solving architectural problems contributed to directing architectural solutions towards what fitted into local societies in spreading the ideas of architectural globalization in the Arab region.

2-3 Pluralism and the Inclination towards Change: Causes and Effects

Architectural thought in the Arab region transformed due to many effects and different reasons. Its result emerged in the pluralism of architectural intellectual theses and the clear inclination towards the necessity of change. The results of these theses were clearly visible in the architectural product, we can divide it into two types according to origin, which will be dealt with in the next sections.

2-3-1 Incoming effects

These include all effects which came from the West as a result of the openness which occurred in all scientific, economic, social and cultural fields. It appeared in the thought transported from the west either in an indirect way when Arab students returned home from the West⁷, at the beginning of the thirties, with the culture and thought they

⁵ Al Hathlol Saleh (2003) : al 'Tāwlamā wa albenaa . Omran Magazine , second issue .

⁶ visual traditionalism means the visual Continuity of Traditional Vocabulary in contemporary architecture

⁷This is what Abd Allah an-Na'im, Masharī has insured in his book "Min al-murabba' ʾila al-ʾuḍāibāt" He explained that there is complete believe in the Academic mediums that the crisis of Arab architecture and especially the crisis of identity in the third world didn't develop till this world has adapted western architectural educational methods and disconnected itself from its past , this disconnection ignored place

had gained⁸, or in a direct way via the practices of western architects who worked in the region which had a clear effect on transporting western influences to it⁹.

The fields of influence were broadened by western thought and ideologies, and new concepts entered which formed an important stage in the contemporary Arab architectural movement

(Fig 1,2).



Fig .1a: Villa Savoye - Arch Le Corbusier- 928-1931- [1]



Fig .1b : Dar Khkhadda- Baghdad - Iraq - Arch Rifat Chadirji 1959. - [5]



Fig .2a:Dar Mouhsen Chanchal - Baghdad., Iraq- Arch. Rifat Chadirji - 1963. - [5]



Fig .2b: Dar Mouhsen Chanchal - Baghdad- Iraq, Arch. Rifaat Chadirji - 1963- [5]

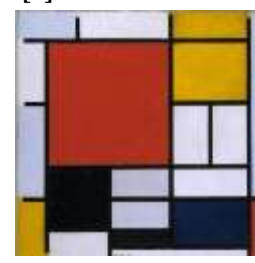


Image 2c : De Stijl - the art of Piet Mondriaan: - [24]

2-3-1 Local Effects

The local effects were distinguished by a group of internal main points which influenced the conversion of the course of contemporary Arab architecture in each country in the Arab region and laid the foundations for these changes which were occurring in it, of which we will mention some in the following sections.

A) The political factor

Politics played an important role in determining the course of Arab architecture in all Arab countries, with everything they went through from being colonies and then mandates before gaining their independence. All of this had a clear influence in transforming contemporary Arabic architecture.

At the beginning of the 20th century, foreign mandate imposed, through its power and culture, a new internal urban arrangement known as modernity which started removing the existed traditional structured and introduced new styles of architectural formations in Arab cities, on the other hand, demanded the existence of new buildings such as governmental buildings and ministries, in order to accommodate the functions imposed by the new political situation. Political ideologies made it easier to import architectural samples, especially the pre-fabricated houses of working class housing.

culture and its residents particularity.

⁸ Ibrahim, 'Abd al-Baqi; Ibrahim, Hāzīm Muḥammad (1993): al-Manzūr at-tārīḥī lil-'imāra fī al-mašriq al-'arabī.- Markaz ad-Dirāsāt at-taḥqīqīya wa al- mi' māriya.

⁹ Ibrahim, 'Abd al-Baqi; Ibrahim, Hāzīm Muḥammad (1993): al-Manzūr at-tārīḥī lil-'imāra fī al-mašriq al-'arabī.- Markaz ad-Dirāsāt at-taḥqīqīya wa al- mi' māriya.

B) Attempts at Functional adaptation

Due to the transformations occurring in international circumstances and technical and scientific developments, architectural programs were forced to assimilate these new functions. Serious attempts had been made to guarantee adaptation of traditional architecture to the new functional occupancy. This was the beginning of a change to the utilitarian structure of the product in contemporary Arab architecture.

C) Economic Factor

The new international situation, which came about as a result of globalization, founded a new system in the general economy. Fundamental changes took place in it and led to integration between the international economy and the local Arab economy. This became clear in the change in the balance of economic forces in the Arabian Gulf as a result of the oil boom, its overcoming of it and the entry of foreign investments to the Arab region, which became the dominant force and the control center in the local economy.

D) Social Factor

The general structure of Arab society changed due to the effect of the development of technology and new means of communication, also due to the openness towards internationality and the change in the style of social relationships which they had caused. All of this reduced the effect of local relationships and contracted the concept of belonging to a local space. The speed of intermixing of thought and cultures increased, as did the ease with which they could be received, It is also worth mentioning the role played by population increase and internal migration in establishing the need to find a solution for the resulting habitation crisis, by finding a way to exploit architectural thought to produce a no-guarantee economic architecture.

On the one hand, the limits of transformation effect extended to embrace the thought of Arab architects, and on the other hand the formative structure of the architectural shape in Arab architecture. So, the design process was marked by **standstill, repetition and a moving away from creativity**. Architects became a solitary elite in the application of their private thought which was controlled in some cases by financial and economic interests.

3- The Effect of Intellectual Pluralism on Forming Contemporary Arab Architecture in the light of Belonging to a Space and the Need for Change

In the second half of the 20th century, architecture in the Arab region was affected by the principle of pluralism. The channels of effect on Arab architectural thought were various. In turn it affected the general methods of Arab architecture in its figurative and formalism formula. Out of this came variety in the ways it could be applied, but it remained possible to classify them as a group which form as whole the main points and thoughts according to which contemporary Arabic architecture was produced. We can consider some phrases as pointing words which embody the transformation of architectural thought in the Arab region, they are: experimentation, renovation, borrowing, selectivity, innovation, tradition and imitation, symbolism).

Architects remained in a struggle between the auto-preservation of architecture and culture, and the need for belonging to a place and the incoming western architectural culture.

By glancing briefly through the Arab architects and by analyzing their thought, we can distinguish four categories of architects whose thought had a role in transforming or renewing contemporary Arab architecture.

The **first** category was distinguished in that their architectural culture was formed in a frame of Arabic culture as a frame and content, they received their architectural education in the schools of the Arab world and within the framework of Arab architecture.

This generated purely local convictions in them which distinguished their architectural thought. The most notable of them is Hassan FATHI. Meanwhile, the architectural thought of the **second** category was formed in western architectural schools, the specialty of their architectural thought was embodied in the frame of western theories and they were influenced by the schools where they were educated, and by the western architects with whom they had contact as a result of the cultural openness to the west through scholarships. This category represents the majority of contemporary Arab architecture pioneers. The most notable of them are Muhammad Saleh Makkeyh, Rifaat Chadrirji, Rasem Badran, Jaffar Tawkan and Abd AlHalim Ibrahim. The **third** category were those who were not influenced by their architectural schools and their fundamental intellectual movements. What they produced remained individual and submitted to the Users thought and to the investor's economic demands - it embodied neither the architect's thought nor the direction from which he had gained his architectural knowledge. Finally, there is the **fourth** category – western architects who applied their design thought in the Arab region, either via engineering consultation companies or via incoming individual attempts. These frames with their principles and movements were applied to appear in contemporary Arab architectural product samples which we can classify according to two main points: the intellectual frame of the architect and the way this thought was applied.

3-1 Pluralism of the Architect's Intellectual Frames in Contemporary Arab Architecture

The **architectural product** in contemporary Arabic architecture was formulated according to multiple frames which we classify according to the architect's intellectual attitude towards the western centralism domination problematic, and according to the level of relationship between western and Arab thought. they could be described within the following frameworks:

A- **Traditional Frame:**

Tends to copy the traditional type **directly**, reproducing similar formations to the models taken from the architectural memory built-up for the region. It completely refuses the contemporary western method and its thought. It calls for a return to simplicity, traditionalism in formation, construction materials and spontaneous suitability with the surroundings.

B- **Renewal Frame:**

This frame acts as if it has surrendered to western centralism, so it submits to its thought and imitates copies of its new imported types, without objectively criticizing the intellectual and material basic principles being imported. These types started to change the visual picture of the Arab city and the constructed architecture it contained, thus creating a revolution in contemporary Arab architectural language without identifying it with the environmental, cultural or social data¹⁰.

C- **Reformation Frame:**

This frame adopts partial change. It aims to establish a contemporary particularity which belongs to its environment and culture in order to establish a new model which carries the spirit of the past, which it shows in a style which takes into consideration the local circumstances, reinforcing the local character which represents the association with the spirit of the place and its memory. This frame is the most notable contemporary Arabic architects' method, in which their creative ability is shown in achieving harmony between tradition and modernity.

¹⁰. Chadrirji , Rifat (2006) *In the Reason and Dialectician* , Arabic Unity Study Center , Lebanon

It is also worth mentioning that there are other forms which displayed no connection to the other frames mentioned, either in thought or in content. So, they remained **marginalized**, not belonging to any western local architectural culture. They played an important role in transforming contemporary Arab architecture and distorting the existing visual picture, which was replaced by decline of the age of modernist architecture in its worst forms.¹¹.

3-2 The Architectural Product as a Result of Pluralist Behaviours and the Movement of Change

. We can classify it in three main movements.

A. styles Influenced by Modern Architecture

We can classify them in two movements.

a) Rational style:

In this movement, architects take into consideration the undeniable resemblance between contemporary western and Arab architecture, but the characteristics of place remain and make a difference. So, architects apply moderately modern formations and aim at logical sustainability for their designing direction by way of a free interpretation of the technical, social and economic reality of the Arab world and its natural specialities, the most notable from this direction being Architect Jafaar Tawkan.



Fig .3a : Bank Of Jordan - Amman - Arch Jafar Tukan -1997.- [23]

b) International style:

This movement is embodied in the multiple-storeyed buildings which do not reflect any particular cultural identity, passed into the region in the fifties by certain architects of architects who were influenced by functionalism and western international style at that time. Architectural structure came out as an imitation similar in some of its applications . (Figures 4).



Fig .4a : Operator Red Crescent 0. - Baghdad, Iraq- Arch Yen Ayoubi, and Nizar Al- Ayoubi 1948 - [28]

Fig.4b : National Electricity Division- Baghdad , Iraq- Arch Kahtan Awni-1967- [12]

¹¹ Special talks with the Architect Jafaar TAWKAN.

c) Sponteous style:

The International concept has changed into bad applications giving out formations warned away from their intellectual , humanitarian and emotional values . It was overcome by mere beneficial aspect which had no balance with architectural concepts. It included formations which contained no special thought and this was clear in their formative style (shape). This direction was the most popular in the Arab region and it left a clear devastating effect on the structure of contemporary Arab architecture. What is called as Moody architecture. Thus, it has no specialty and was marked by generality which was good for anytime and any place¹² (Fig 5)



Fig. 5a : Damascuse - example of Sponteous Movement: - [31]



Fig. 5c : Makkah al-Mukarramah - Saudi Arabia- example of Sponteous Movement: - [32]



Fig. 5b : Lattakia -Syria- - examples of Sponteous style -Author



B. styles Affected by Late Modernist Architecture

We can classify many movements which belong, in terms of their foundations and in their formative style, to Post-Modernist architecture.

a) Sculptural style:

This movement includes designs which bring exclusively symbolic indications or an expressive design idea, or they may come in a special language, direct or indirect – thus their borrowed shapes will be connected with nature. Some may embody metaphysical abstract ideas by using symbolic shapes and special indications or by using material shapes which belong to life in an abstract way. (Fig 6).

¹² Fayyād, Rahif (1999) : al-‘imāra al-ghānīya wa al-ī‘timār al-mūgi‘.- AL Farabi Publishing House- Beirut- First Edition.



Fig. 6a : Gardaka Museum – Gardaka,- Egypt - Arch Ahmad MITO- Under construction. - [24]



Fig .6b : Kuwait Parliament Building, Kuwait City, Arch Jorn Utzon (1972-1983) - [11]

b) Excessive Technique style:

This direction is distinguished by its inclination towards renovation and establishing architectural styles which do not belong to the past but which resemble the pure western movement in terms of vocabulary, formation and shape. It shows western thought and its shapes in an extreme, excessive style in the constructive framework and developed technological uses of buildings as an attempt to accomplish the dazzling element on a technological scale which recent western architecture depends on.. Many of the applications of this movement may be unsuitable for the place and the society they belong to (Fig 7).



Fig.7a : Burj Khalifa -Dubai, United Arab Emirates- Arch Adrian Smith at SOM ,(2004-2020) - [34]



Fig .7b Emirates Office Tower- Dubai, Arch Norr Group Consultants In.,(1996-1999) - [36]



C. styles Influenced by Post Modernist Architecture

Contemporary Arab architecture movements appeared, which were influenced by Post Modernist architecture which carried special cultural values – either local, historical or traditional. We can classify them as follows.

a) localism style:

Taking locality into account is an issue which came to prominence in Arab architecture at the beginning of the 1940s. It was presented as a theoretically serious issue by architects such as Hassan FATHI and Abd Al-Wahed WAKEEL, in order to counter European architectural centralism with their architectural intellectual presentations. The movement used traditional architecture as its reference and directly copied the traditional format¹³. (Fig 8).

¹³ Chadirji , Rifat (2006) In the Reason and Dialectician , Arabic Unity Study Center , Lebanon



Fig .8a : International Center for Ceramic Fustat - Fustat - Cairo- Arch Jamal Amer -1996. - [25]

b) Selective Value style:

This movement is based on selecting from multiple sources carrying cultural values belonging to the place¹⁴. These may be visual formality or symbolic or underlying values,. So this architectural shape becomes a visual language used to express identity. (Fig 9).



Fig .9a : "the Malwiya" The Great Mosque of Samarra - completed in 851- Samarra, Iraq- [37]

Fig. 9b : Le Royal Hotel, Amman - Arch Richard Martinet (1998- 2002) - [29]

The above review of methods and directions in contemporary Arab architectural thought, and the observation of the movements which this transformations paved the way for, revolve for the most part around the same axis which aims to counter the artistic cultural banishment movement and attempts to demolish the identity and the local architectural character which the Arab region is facing.

c) Abstract Style in Contemporary Arab Architecture:

We ought to say that some architects have depended on symbolism and dismantling to embody their architectural thoughts and to reach solutions which had contemporary spirit and accomplished the belonging. They used a new method for expression it had a special language carrying previous references in the receivers thought and starts translating into architectural thoughts range. They insure balance between copy, complete metaphor and complete abstract. This balance between the two cases creates an interesting interpretation of the text or it keeps the receiver continuously connected , this leads to multiple readings for the architectural product but within the limits of the known source and the metaphor sources. We have to mention that metaphor resources might be as a direct metaphor (configurative) or as an indirect ones. It also might be a textual metaphor depending on similarities or differences between the metaphor vocabulary and the ensured idea (like using domes, arches, bones, skulls...etc.) or configurative which moves directly to the mind and depends on the direct visual contact. It depends on the abstracting the

¹⁴Mashari al Naim has explained in his book " Min al-murabba' ıla al-'uđāibāt " that selectivity originates the architectural identity, it makes it something and then it changes it to a picture thus it becomes a ready data with definite aspects (see "Min al-murabba' ıla al-'uđāibāt" 2001 ru'ā wa afkār fī al-'imāra as- sa'ūđiya al-mu'āşira. Kitāb ar-rīyāđ mu'asat al-yamāma aş-şahāfiya- al-'adad 94

concepts and the relations related to the designed idea then connecting it with the appropriate metaphor.

Architect Rasem Badran was distinguished in his latest works by his dependence on abstract metaphor in making his projects in a style which belonged to post-modernism architecture with a superiority in style, language and the way of expression(Fig 10).



Fig .10a;Trade Center in Ramallah - Palestine, Arch Rasem Badran- [25]



Fig. 10b ; Nesco Building - Tripoli - Libya, 2000 Arch Rasem Badran - [25]

3-3 The Beginnings of Architectural intellectual Awareness as a Step Controlling the Stream of Change in terms of Place Affiliation in the Arab Region:

Interest in architectural thought and its production began in the 1980s. Architectural circles witnessed notable activity in the Arab region in the field of architectural awareness, due to the conflict between the cultural values which the Arab societies started to suffer from, especially the Gulf region and the economic changes occurring in the region. This awareness was embodied either by the individual efforts of some from the distinguished pioneers' generation in contemporary Arab architecture, or by collective efforts like scientific institutions and staff which encourage distinguished serious architectural attempts and offer prizes and rewards for that purpose, like the Agha Khan Organization, Arabic Cities Organization, the International Committee of Islamic Cultural Heritage Preservation and the Islamic Cities and Capitals Organization (Fig 11).

Architectural magazines and specialized books played an important role in supporting and broadening intellectual horizons by introducing them to the pioneer architects, their works and intellectual representations, in addition to the scientific conferences which devoted the contemporary Arabic architecture subjects and their problematic issues as a basic axis for discussions, conversations and exchanging experiences and points of view¹⁵ (Fig 11).

Theoretical studies held by some architects also contributed to developing the general architectural thought, with their research into the architecture subject according to critical argumentative thought like Rifat JADERJI (from Iraq) who considers that we are "able to enrich our contemporary architectural history with regional architecture emerging from the inherited architecture". He also considers that "Architecture is the product of argumentative reaction, there is no equality between regional speciality and between transporting from the past, each age has its own techniques, expressions and its beauty values, fleeing to the past is just an obstacle in the context of high-quality progress". He also emphasises that international architecture does not flourish or become richer without giving chances to the regional dimension which enriches the architectural international experience ¹⁶(Fig 11).

¹⁵ Abd Allah an-Na'im, :Masharī- al hādāthā wa almġtam 'i al islāmī., al-'imāra alinsāniya fi Aha Khan prize-Albena Magazine issue no.136.

¹⁶ Look at aġ-Ġadirġi, Rif'at writings:-

Ali Raafat (Egypt) is distinguished by his research in architectural creative concepts and reasons in his series "Trilogy of architectural creativity"(Fig 11).

As for Khaled As- Sultany (Iraq) who had dealt with Arab architecture in a critical and analytical way, which denoted on a deep and clear knowledge about contemporary Arabic architecture . he provided the reader with a background about the architect , his cultural origin in this way he was paving according to a special intellectual liner. Then he would start analyzing the work shape depending on signs and sense basics of the designed ides and the materials. After that he starts transforming the sensuality of the picture to the reader by descriptive processes which reflect the living reality. It ends up with evaluating the work and turning to the functional performance style as well as to his works which are concerned about understanding the Western architectural theory and its applications. His works are marked by following the comparative critical style¹⁷ (Fig 11).

Critical studies that talked about contemporary Arab architecture and Arab architectural identity, played a large role in motivating the special awareness of architects and the awareness of the general public in order to reach to a contemporary architectural awareness. Forming the architectural awareness of people is the effective way to build the architectural identity which takes its effective strength from society and its individuals. The most distinguished writer who wrote about Arab architecture and criticized it is Mashary Abd Allah Al NAIM (Saudi Arabia) who addressed architecture and its problematic issues in an objective way – both in depth and simply. ¹⁸(Fig 11).

The writings of the critical Architect Rahif FAYAD (Lebanon) were also special in that they represented a new and important concept in contemporary Arab architectural thought, and that was the concept of resistance in architecture and the role of the resisting architect in securing harmony and balance between the two concepts of place belonging and change as a need and as an inevitable result of architectural transformations in the light of international transformations¹⁹ (Fig 11)

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- Tahaa Street And Hammer Smith
 - In the Reason and Dialectician of Architecture.
 - al-Ūḥaiḍir wa al-qaṣr al-billūrī.
 - A Conversation in Architecture structure.

¹⁷Look at Khaled SULTANI:

- Architectural Visions.
- Architecture in the Umayyad Period.
- One Hundred Year of Modernism. Al Mada Publishing House.
- Architectural Tannāṣ mi'māri Variation on Concept Applications Works of Danish Architects in Arabic Countries, AL Mada Publishing House, Damascus

¹⁸Look at an-Na'im, Masharī:

- al-'imāra wa at-Thaqafa – Dirāsāt naqḍīya fī al-'imāra al-'arabīya al-mu'āṣira.
- Mīn al-murabba' īla al-'uḍāibāt·thoughts and visions on contemporary Saudi architecture.
- The Home Environment in Saudi Arabia and Gulf States Growth of Identity Crises and Origin of Identity.
- The Home Environment in Saudi Arabia and Gulf States The Dilemma of Cultural Resistance Identity in Transition

¹⁹Look at FAYAD Rahif writings:

- Rich Architecture and Painful Construction.
- Architecture and Place Awareness.
- From Architecture to the City.
- Construction and Memory Construction and Illusion.
- Summaries- Architecture, Thought and Society .



Rifaat chadirji



Rahif fayad



Khaled As-Sultany



Ali Raafat



Mashary AlNaim

Fig.11 : critical Architectes

■conclusions and recommendations:

1. New visions appeared and were translated into the updating of thought and application, then they condensed the transformative movements and their pluralism. Thereby, both pluralism in behavior and in the continuously changing procedures in the formative intellectual process became something normal and a definitive result of real data with all its constituent parts. These all created important upheavals in design, starting from the west of Europe and America and spreading worldwide

2. many transformation played an important role in **bringing** the architectural thought in the Arab region **to a standstill**, forming fertile ground for the acceptance of these changes and incoming architectural thoughts.

3. the economic changes were reflected in the Arab built environment with all its givens, the most important of which being the formative conformation of the local architecture.

4. the Social Factor caused repeated samples of the storeyed habitation units, which at the beginning were reserved for those who had a limited income and then spread to all the social and cultural levels, they became a dominant feature of the general residential style in contemporary Arabic architecture.

5. The architects depended on it directly therefore they defied the controls which were depended on in Arab architecture, from the shape to the constructive framework and cultural and social values. Soon, this was reflected in the Arab city and appeared in changing **the visual shape of the city** in general and the formative formation of its buildings in particular, which caused the absence of the true concept of architecture which requires formations to be found which suit society and embody the spirit of the place.

6. The formation of contemporary Arabic architecture remains representative in spite of the distinction between its intellectual frames, aiming to transform architecture negatively or positively to blend in with the technical developments coming out of modern industry and new, non-traditional economic data, then produces it either in strong hybrid shapes or by shapes resulting of-due to geographical and organic reality of the place they are connected to its heritage and its historical built environment, but in different shapes. They may be selective, abstract, copied or transformed.

7. the contemporary Arab architecture is **eclectic** in all directions is either eclectic by drawing on the west, influenced by its architectural thought and its shapes or eclectic by drawing on the East with its eclecticism and connectivity with tradition and local architecture or **the Sponteous** which considered to be the most widely spread one in the Arab region, that has had an evident destructive effect on contemporary Arab architectural structure.

The basic thing in this process is to be **armed with a deep awareness of contemporary architecture** – not to monitor its shape, but to gain a deep understanding of its causes and the reasons for its creation. We can say that Arab modernism started forming and actually appearing in contemporary Arab architecture, it is an important experience which stands alone.

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