

An Experimental Educational Approach through Teaching the History of Architecture and Heritage for a better Practice in Architectural Design

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Abstract

Many architecture schools do not apply experimental learning in teaching theoretical courses like the history of architecture courses. There is a gap between what the students learn in theoretical courses like architectural styles in history courses and design practices. History classes are taught with a teacher-oriented approach, where students miss active and experimental learning. As a result, in the Egyptian urban setting, we find buildings designed using architectural styles, mostly classical designs, without respecting the technical, aesthetic, and human factors. Furthermore, nowadays, the Egyptian government is very active in constructing the new Administrative Capital of Egypt. The new city is located 45 kilometers East of Cairo, and it is planned to be Egypt's new business and financial center. The new Downtown of the new capital city, or "The new Garden City," is planned to reassemble Khedival Cairo's peculiar value buildings with the renaissance, neo-classic, eclectic, and neo-baroque styles.

As architectural education cannot be separated from current architectural practices, this paper introduces the research project results in the course "History of Architecture-level two." The course was taught in the first semester of the academic year (2018-19) in faculty of Fine arts, Cairo, Helwan University, Egypt. The students were asked to select a heritage building with a peculiar value from the Khedival Cairo, analyze it with the seven principles of design, and propose a design for a building's facades in the new Capital city Downtown.

This paper aims to introduce the results of the students' work, analyzing their designs, and the effect of experimental learning in developing their intellectual skills. The paper includes the results of a designed questioner answered by the students to evaluate the research project and the link between the history of architecture, heritage, and architecture design. The paper shows the importance of applying experimental learning and linking theoretical and practical courses for achieving better architecture practice.

Keywords:

Architectural Education, Experimental learning, Khedival Cairo, Heritage, Classical Styles.