

Elements of interior design in the second half of the nineteenth century (the era of Khedive Ismail) An analytical study of Abdeen Palace

Prof. Wael Mahmoud

**Professor, Department of Interior Design & Furniture, Faculty of Applied Arts,
Helwan University.**

wael_rafat2@yahoo.com

Dr. Rafik nour el dine

the higher institute of applied arts -6 October department: interior architecture& decoration

rafiknour@yahoo.com

Summary:

Over the years, Egypt has witnessed a revolution in architecture, interior design and furniture, affected by many external western influences. There is no doubt that the era of Khedive Ismail was one of the most prominent transformations in architecture, interior design and furniture compared to the rest of the ages in the history of modern Egypt with a unique vision of the modern urban renaissance. He had an enlightened European vision, trying to restore the glory of his grandfather Muhammad Ali Pasha, but in a more civilized and organized way. The Paris-Orient project presented by Khedive Ismail, which had the full features of the Western European model, caused the most influence in the form of Cairo's architectural visual image, dominated by European styles. Despite the presence of the Ottoman and Mameluke models, the European immigrant trend has spread widely and took two basic forms: the straight revivalism and the eclecticism styles. Abdeen palace was chosen for this study, where this palace has occupied a distinguished place in our history since its construction, it has witnessed more than 100 years of political, social and artistic events which consist an important part of modern Egypt's history. Abdeen palace is also distinguished by the variety of its different interior design styles that decorate its halls. As it is considered one of the most palaces that includes the largest number of styles that came to Egypt during the nineteenth century. In this research, the different styles imported to Egypt during this historical period will be studied by analyzing the interior design elements of Abdeen Palace. The study concluded that architecture and interior design in Egypt revived a range of European styles such as Baroque, Renaissance, Rococo and others and extended to the revival of Islamic style. All have been shown in this analytical study of their design elements, we had reached some of the rules that define the styles that were imported to Egypt in the nineteenth century, which can be used by designers later as a reference for the design identity of that period.

Research importance: it is a documentation of the design elements of the European styles models that were imported to Egypt & were used in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Research aims: Shedding light on the elements of the interior design of Abdeen Palace to document the method of formulating the European styles models arrived in that era in an attempt to link the content of the design process and its philosophy and not to restrict it or convert it into a purely decorative process. Research Methodology: The Historical Approach: -A historical overview of the political, religious and cultural conditions that helped the emergence of European styles. - Identify the foreign architectural styles used in the period under study.

Inductive approach: Monitoring and analyzing the influence of foreign styles in interior design and furniture, and studying elements of architecture, interior design, and furniture represented in Abdeen Palace in the second half of the nineteenth century. This analysis can be used to develop a system through which the process of reviving the different styles can be carried out in an organized manner and without prejudice to the rules of the model.

• The reasons for the transformation of Cairo architecture in the nineteenth century. The main cause of these transformations is civilizational friction with the European culture. This friction occurred gradually and **we can monitor it in three stages:**

1 - Friction with the European model in the form of a confrontation between it and the Islamic Ottoman East through the French campaign (1798-1801).

2- Getting inspired by the western experience in building the Egyptian Renaissance through the project of revival in the era of Muhammad Ali (1805-1848).

3- Importing the complete Western model (its value and materiality) in what was called the East Paris Project during the era of Khedive Ismail (1863-1879). It is the stage under study in this research.

Khedive Ismail ascended the throne of Egypt at the end of 1863. He received a great share of education at the scientific renaissance, and it represented a trend that reached extremism in adopting the Western European model, especially towards France. This led to a difference in the era of Ismail from the rest of the ages in the modern history of Egypt. It was an enlightened European vision. He tried to restore the glory of his grandfather Muhammad Ali, but in an advanced civilized style, but he had to satisfy many parties, the most important of which was the Ottoman governor, and the members of the royal family, the British, and the people. For Ismail, the modernization of Cairo was a symbol of Egypt's civilization and embodiment of his overwhelming desire to witness a European capital. Cairo established a modern state on the banks of the Nile, stretching from Alexandria to Khartoum. So he devised a plan and was determined to implement it, and not to be neutral on it, no matter how many obstacles multiplied, and no matter how compelling the days he was to soften, temporarily and pretending to be the opposite of what he intended for distant purposes. **The plan was to:**

First: To put Egypt in the way of being a modern city by following the European model example.

Second: to win political independence for it.

Third: To advance it to the ranks of the great powers.

Khedive Ismail carried out many reformation projects inside and outside Cairo. On top of these projects was the establishment of New Cairo in what was called (Paris East), with the aim of catching up with European countries.

1- Urban impacts of the Paris East project. Ismail began building another new Cairo that would serve as a European city in the heart of Africa. So he put a general planning program for Cairo and called it (Paris East) a confirmation of this desire, and a challenge to the criticism campaigns that the Western press directed towards its urban projects. The reformation works aimed at this planning project were summed up in a group of major projects **called the Seven Projects Program, which consisted of seven projects: - Nile Stream diversion project**

- the entrance to Cairo and Abdeen area

- the Azbakeya region-the eastern beach of the Nile

- the western beach- and Zamalek.

The program of the planning project included a set of points, the most important of which were:
- Planning new areas outside the borders of the old city. - Broad streets in new neighborhoods and others that penetrate the old neighborhoods, such as Abdeen and Azbakeya, to connect them with the main centers in the city.

This transformation, presented by Khedive Ismail, resulted in a change in the visual image of the city of Cairo and the rest of the Egyptian cities, where the European models replaced the local ones (incoming and inherited). The biological idea of the neoclassical architecture and interior design in Egypt represented the revival of a group of European styles such as Baroque and Renaissance and extended to include the revival of the Islamic style.

Abdeen Palace: Construction date: 1863 AD - 1873 AD.

The style: the general style of the palace is the modern Renaissance style mixed with some elements of the (New-Classicism). The halls were characterized by eclecticism where each wing had its own style.

Construction: The building was constructed, and it contains about 500 rooms in addition to the multiple corridors.

1- Architectural description: This palace was built on the style of the French Renaissance, with some elements of neoclassicism. This style was embodied in some palaces and installations constructed in the city of Cairo in the period of the nineteenth century.

2- Interior Design Elements: The interior design styles in the palace are many: The Neo-Baroque style, the eclecticism style, the neo-classical, the Rococo style, and the neo-Islamic style.

In this search, we have recognized the difference between each of these styles and how they were applied in Abdeen palace, after studying the imported models and analyzing the elements of interior design in the era of Khedive Ismail in the second part of the nineteenth century through an analytical study of some halls of Abdeen Palace that bear the REVIVALISM features of the classic styles represented in the REVIVAL thought of the new classics and the ECLECTIC idea of architecture and interior design in Egypt, reviving a group of European models Like Baroque, Renaissance, and Rococo, it extended to include the revival of the Islamic style. **After studying, the general rules can be divided into three groups of rules consisting of any of the models as follows:**

1- Fixed rules: These are the distinctive rules OF THE STYLE to be revived, which represent the basic criteria inferred from the determinants affecting this model in its time. They are:

- The presence of a major axis on which the main voids in the building follow with the possibility of having sub-axes.
- Using modules in building design, whether on the level of the horizontal projection, facades, or interior design.
- Emphasizing the entrance using different architectural elements.
- The horizontal span of the building block.

2 - Changing rules: They are the rules related to style techniques such as raw materials, building materials and construction methods used in it, which can change according to modern technologies or can be developed to keep pace with modern developments and other elements

that complement the relationship between design and philosophical thought behind design and the revival of styles, including: The methods of dealing with the basic elements of interior design within the internal voids in the neoclassical, varied between three methods: the architectural style, the decorative style, and the color style, which the learner knew as follows:

- Architectural style: It is a method that relies on the use of external architectural elements in interior design in order to achieve an integration between architecture and interior design.
- Decorative method: It is a method that relies on the use of decorative elements such as sculpture, prominent sculpture, photography etc. as an essential element of the interior design. □
- Chromatic method: is largely dependent on the use of large and diverse color groups to form the inner space.

The methods of elements complementing the design also varied between three methods: The sobriety style, the luxurious style, and the dazzling style, which the learner knew as follows:

- Sobriety method: Sobriety style is characterized by simplicity and the use of a limited set of classic decorative elements in a typical pattern with the use of a single color – Mono color
- Style of luxury: The style of luxury is a medieval method between sobriety and dazzling, as it uses a set of elements that complement the interior design in a sober, balanced manner away from exaggeration.
- Dazzling style: The dazzling style relies on mixing a wide range of elements that complement the interior design in order to stimulate the mind. The method involves a great deal of exaggeration and cost, contrary to the simplicity

and reverence are called for by the principles of the new classics. One or more of the main elements handling methods were used for the interior design, in addition to one or more complementary elements handling methods, depending on the type of activity inside the space. Furniture that belongs to the model to be revived has been used to complement the bio-visual picture of architectural and interior design.

- Method of handling: It is represented in the design vision of the designer, which differs from one designer to another according to their cultural background and the ability to formulate the design in terms of the aforementioned multiple uses of classic design patterns.

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