



Modern Heritage in the MENA Region

Edited by
Leila Javanmardi, Maher Deeb,
Dalia Ibrahim, Hans-Rudolf Meier,
Franziska Matthes

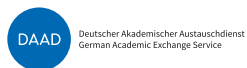
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INTRODUCTION

Leila Javanmardi, Maher Deeb, Dalia Ibrahim,
Hans-Rudolf Meier, Franziska Matthes,
Bauhaus-Universität Weimar

In the past decades, the definition of built heritage has become broader and includes the architecture and urbanism products of the modern era, yet the recognition of this rich legacy is still lacking in the Middle East and North Africa, the so-called MENA region. The susceptibility caused by the socio-economic and political conditions has put the heritage of the modern movement for years under serious threat. But what is considered modern and what is modern heritage in the MENA region?

Answering those questions was the motivation that triggered the authors to organize the *Modern Heritage in the MENA Region* conference. Held at Bauhaus-Universität Weimar in August 2017 and as part of Young Bauhaus research International Conference series, the conference aimed to address the challenges identification, documentation and preservation of modern heritage are facing in the MENA.

A multidisciplinary group of young researchers, Leila Javanmardi, Maher Deeb and Dalia Ibrahim supervised by Hans-Rudolf Meier, chair for Heritage Conservation and Architectural History, took the opportunity to bring together academics, scholars, and young researches to exchange experiences and to discuss options and strategies on the topic and to explore new approaches and strategies regarding the different aspects of *Modern Heritage*. This conference particularly focused on the 19th and 20th century legacy of architecture and urban planning. Furthermore, it highlighted the countries such as Syria and Iraq that are suffering from civil wars which not only are causing loss of lives but also influence their heritage significantly.

The conference also focused on the role of engineers in documenting the structures including damage by utilizing modern technology. Such documentation provides important material for further theoretical studies which help

engineers to develop models such as Finite Element Models (FEM) to assess the structural health performance of modern Heritage. The current research programs at the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, such as the research training groups GRK 2227 *Identity and heritage*, GRK 1462 Evaluation of Coupled Numerical and Experimental Partial Models in Structural Engineering, and the BMBF-Research Group *Which monuments, which modernity?* were also reflected at this event.

The conference strived to provide an international platform and to promote the cooperation between the national and international academics, scientists and young researchers. Within this two-day conference, the discussion was enhanced by valuable keynote presentations from Mirjam Brusius (University of Oxford: People and Places. Some thoughts on Preservation), Mina Marefat (Georgetown University: Whose Heritage is it anyway? Complexities & Contradictions of Modern Heritage in the MENA region) Aylin Orbasli (Oxford Brookes University: Preserving the modern 'vernacular' in the Middle East) and Norman Hallermann (Bauhaus-Universität Weimar: UAS based Survey, Documentation and Preservation of Heritage Structures), as well as 22 presentations and posters prepared by researchers from 9 countries: Algeria, Egypt, Germany, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Kuwait, Syria and Turkey. The interdisciplinary international audience represented the importance of this topic not only for the MENA region but for the whole world.

The current book is emerged from a selection of the contributed papers at this conference. As a pioneer work on the state of modern heritage in the Middle East and North Africa, what this book and the authors do hope to accomplish is to bring into attention the legacy of modern era in the MENA and by providing new perspectives on this matter, bridge between practice and theory. The book aims to highlight challenges facing identifying, preserving and documenting modern heritage as well as the role of new technologies in this process in three main fields of architecture, urbanism and civil engineering. However, it does not intend to provide a comprehensive documentary of the modern heritage in the east. Instead, it provides critical reflections on modern heritage practices in the region in the following four chapters:

Chapter one, Architecture of Modernity: In this chapter Aylin Orbasli focuses on the modernist vernacular architecture in the Middle East. Using distinct geographical regions in Turkey, Jordan, Israel/Palestine and the Arabian Gulf States as the case studies the paper highlights this rarely recognized heritage as the representative of a critical period of modernisation in the region. Further it addresses the current conditions and identifies the conservation challenges. Mouloud Allek has particularly focused on the relationship between homocentricity and the architectural structures. The paper provides three philosophical contexts in order to reconsider the relationship between human beings and structures and highlight the importance of reviewing the development of human thinking from the *inside thinking* toward the *outside thinking*. Finally, Sajida Kadhim Oleiwi, Hisham Alaa Husain Alsaady,

and Ghada Alslik unfold the gradual transformation of traditional residential houses in Iraq and trace the evolution of Iraqi residential modernism. The role of modernization on the alternation of single-family houses and the reshape of the urban fabric is the focus of this research. Later, the article traces the physical and functional changes through the time and identifies the major characteristics of the modern house.

Chapter two: Heritage and the Effect of Capitalism engages the reader with a critical approach toward the modern heritage. The first two articles of this chapter unravel the effect of profit-oriented policies on the built heritage of the modern era and the last article analyses the modern heritage through the lens of production of space under planetary urbanization. In this respect, Leila Javanmardi reviews the rise of modern heritage practices in the world and through import-export approach seeks to unfold the state and society perspective. Furthermore, by providing different case studies in Egypt, Iran and Turkey, the paper highlights the existing gaps in legal apparatus and the role of real estate market in the demolition of modern heritage in the region. In the last part the role of heritage activists has been discussed. This paper is followed by the work of Didem Acar, Didar Acar Karadeniz, and Sıla Burcu Başarır who have focused on the transformation of architecture and urban spaces under the neoliberalism policies in Turkey. Their paper discusses the effect of *nationalist-conservative ideology* as part of the applied neoliberalism policies on restructuring the cities after 1980. The two concepts of *revanchism* and *gentrification* have also been traced on the implemented urban projects in the two cities of Istanbul and Ankara. In the last paper, Aidin Torkameh discusses the methodological and ontological dimension of the modern heritage and criticizes the today's dominant approach of urban studies in Iran. The article begins with the introduction of Tehran Circle, a group of Iranian urban researchers, concentrating on problematization of the Tehran urbanization process. The group operates as an informal collective consisting up to 15 urban researchers mostly based in Iran or joining from abroad. The group actively works on creation of a new conceptual framework based on Lefebvre's ideas on one hand and the social realities of contemporary Iran on the other.

Chapter three: Adaptive Reuse Approach sheds the light on the importance of adoptive reuse approaches. By providing different case studies in Iran, Turkey and Iraq, the three papers examine the success of adoptive reuse approaches at a more practical level.

Somayeh Fadaei Nezhad Bahramjerdi, Pirouz Hanachi, and Hadi Naderi, identify the effective criteria of adaptive reuse of architectural heritage and study these criteria in two case studies in Tehran. While the authors address the Nazdik café complex and the Ab-Anbar Gallery, they point out that these two case studies are among the first projects that have been refurbished by the private sector. Further they represent a set of actions which have been taken in both case studies and mention the aspects which were determined

as the main criteria for the adaptive reuse approach. The second paper by Sedef Sav and Özge Cordan points out the importance of ensuring sustainability through adaptive reuse of historic buildings and focuses on preserving the historical buildings that have lost their original function and have been re-functionalised. Using Nicosia City Museum as an example, the study aims to find out for which reasons and for what qualities historic buildings are being used as museums and to identify the intervention approaches. Hadeer Alshami and Ghada Alslik have mainly focused on the rehabilitation of modern heritage buildings in Iraq. With an introduction to the modern heritage in Iraq, the authors discuss the types of risks and the challenges that modern heritage faces.

Finally, chapter four: Heritage Preservation and Sustainability engages the reader from engineering perspective and provides an overview of the conservation policies in the region. Mohammadreza Ranjazemay Azari and Mohammadjavad Mahdavinejad explore the structure of industrial factories. By documenting different case studies, their work classifies the structural typology of industrial legacy of modern era in Iran. The paper also presents the safeguarding and consolidation strategies for the adaptation of contemporary life. Adham Abulnour represents an example on preparedness for possible threats that are unconsidered in historical sites in Egypt. With an introduction to recent conservation projects in the Karnak the paper shows the simulation experiments which was shrouded by scientific uncertainty and insufficient data.

As an outcome of the cooperation between Iran and TICCIH (The International Committee for Conservation of Industrial Heritage), huge steps have been taken to document and preserve many industrial heritages in Iran. Mohammadjavad Mahdavinejad, Atefeh Omidkhah Kharashtomi, Maryam Talaei, and Maryam Rasoolzadeh highlighted in this research such movement and introduced a framework to enhance this valuable building identification procedure. The research presents a multi-stage value framework that translates the qualitative-based selection as a conceptual goal to a quantitative-based selection procedure.

Acknowledgments

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About the Editors

Leila Javanmardi: born in 1986 in Tehran, Iran. She is an urban researcher and in her final year of PhD at Bauhaus-Universität Weimar. She received a bachelor's degree in urban planning and a master's degree in urban and regional design. Interested in Marxian urban studies her research focuses on power, social class, and urbanism under capitalism. In her doctoral research, she investigates modern urbanism in Iran and the pattern behind the regime's dictatorial policies. She was the scholarship holder of the Post-Graduate funding from the free state of Thuringia and has working experiences as lecturer and teaching assistant as well as urban and landscape designer in Iran and Germany. Researching the legacy of modern urbanism in her last work on one side and observing the effect of recent events and conflicts in Middle East and North Africa on the other, motivated her to highlight the fragility of modern heritage in the region.

Maher Deeb – Data Scientist: born on 06.09.1984, Tartous, Syria. He graduated 2007 from Damascus University-Syria as a civil engineer – structural engineering department. He participated in 2009 in the "Natural Hazard and Risk in structural Engineering (NHRE)" international Master program at the Bauhaus-Universität and obtained his degree in 2011. He joined the research training group GRK1462 and finished his doctoral study in 2018. In his work, he discusses the influence of engineering model quality on the reliability of the inspection method for damage detection in civil engineering structures. Health Monitoring and preservation of modern heritage against natural hazards are interesting conference subtopics where his Master and Ph.D. works can be applied in practice.

Dalia Ibrahim: born on 02.02.1984. She holds a Master of Science in Architectural Engineering from Cairo University. Currently, she is a PhD. candidate in Architecture and Urbanism Faculty at Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, Germany. She has nine years of professional experience in the field of architecture and urban planning; undertaking data collection, data analysis and reports preparation for several regional and national environmental management and urban planning projects such as Vulnerability Assessment of Freshwater Resources to Climate Change and Environment Outlook for the Arab Region. In addition to this, she also works as a user experience architect for digital products, taking them from concept to launch, conceptualizing, creating an interaction design and building design interfaces.

Hans-Rudolf Meier: born on 09.11.1956 in Zurich, Switzerland. He is the chair holder for the Preservation of Historical Monuments and Sites and the

History of Architecture at the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism, Bauhaus-Universität Weimar. He graduated in history of art and medieval archaeology at the University of Basel, where he got also his PhD degree and the *Venia legendi* with his postdoctoral thesis (habilitation). He was an assistant at the Institute of the History of Art, University Basel and at the Medieval Institute of the University of Fribourg, Research-Member of the Swiss Institute in Rome and Assistant Professor at the Institute for Preservation of Historical Monuments at the Faculty of Architecture of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH Zürich). 2003–2007 he was Professor for Preservation of Historical Monuments and Building Archaeology and Dean of the post-gradual Master course *Conservation and Urban Development* at the Technische Universität Dresden, before he changed to the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, where he was 2011/12 Vice-president. He published 12 books and more than 80 articles in the field of history and theory of preservation, urban heritage, history of architecture and medieval art history and archaeology.

Franziska Matthes: born on 17.09.1982 in Gera, Germany. She graduated in Communication Science at the University of Erfurt, where she also got her PhD degree in 2014. Since 2014 she worked as project coordinator at the Bauhaus Research School, a central organisation which supports young researchers and artists at the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, where she is, inter alia, responsible for the internationalization, qualification and funding of doctoral candidates. As researcher and science management she organised several international and interdisciplinary academic and business conferences.

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Introduction

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**CHAPTER ONE:
ARCHITECTURE OF MODERNITY**

I Preserving the modernist vernacular in the Middle East

Aylin Orbasli
Oxford Brookes University, UK

Abstract

This paper focuses on the fast disappearing urban heritage of the modernist neighbourhoods in the Middle Eastern. This, often overlooked, architectural legacy of the mid-twentieth century is significant for the role it played in the early transformation of many cities into their *modern* image. Though often modest in scale these buildings collectively exemplify a critical period of modernisation and urbanisation in the region. Rarely recognized as *heritage* the modernist vernacular is rapidly disappearing as it is subsumed by urban growth and renewal or adapted beyond recognition. There are, however, a number of examples where the value of this heritage and early modernist neighbourhoods is being recognized, though often in the context of new functions.

1 Introduction

It is now widely accepted that the modernist architecture that emerged in the MENA region in the middle of the twentieth century is not simply a replication of an international style, but a uniquely local and regional expression in the spirit of its time (Isenstadt, & Kishwar, 2008). Designed by a combination of Western architects, émigré architects and local architects trained abroad, modernist architecture has made a distinct mark on the region with significant politico-geographic variations. In the process, highly iconic buildings have emerged, and some such as the Sheraton in Doha or the emblematic Kuwait towers have become national symbols and arbiters of a tradition

in their own right. The focus here, however, is the more modest expression of modernism that became evident in towns and cities across the region often taking the form of 2–3 story apartment buildings that emerged within many of the newly laid out neighbourhoods from the middle of the last century. I will refer to these collectively as a modernist vernacular.

The intension of this paper is to consider this component of Middle Eastern heritage that is regularly overlooked as being locally or nationally significant in terms of architectural heritage or character defining in the context of urban conservation. The architecture of the mid-twentieth century has had a profound role in shaping cities in the region and introducing an architecture and urban form that is international in style, yet profoundly local in character. Though often modest in scale these buildings collectively exemplify a critical period of modernisation and urbanisation in the region, and need to be considered with the discourses of urban conservation and urban identity. Like most urban heritage, it is a collective value connected to urban morphology that is character defining rather than the value of each individual building.

As a means of containing the discussion, this paper specifically considers three distinct geographical regions of Turkey, Jordan and Israel, and the Arabian Gulf States. Each have experienced a distinct form of modernism as part of urbanisation processes in the middle of the twentieth century with differing influences. They do, however, face a number of shared challenges in protecting and conserving this urban heritage. Since these buildings often appeared in newly laid out neighbourhoods, and on occasion within older areas, I will roughly position my argument within a Conzenian approach to urban morphology by considering the formative urban process to encompass urban plan, buildings and utilisation and the emergence of new typologies in the periphery (Larkham, 1996).

2 Background and historic context

Colonial influences in some places, the emergence of nation states, and a post-colonial search for local identity have all played a role in the production of modernist architecture in the region (Isenstadt, & Kishwar, 2008). Middle Eastern countries have created their own versions of modernism as it heralded a new era of urban development. Wittrock (1998) has articulated the arrival of modernism to the periphery as being *belated* and *inauthentic* in the sense that it has merged with local vernacular practices. Akcan (2012) describes the process as being one of *translation*. Modernisation in the region came from a combination of European influences and powerful national leaders. The initial period of modernism was often a case of European architects transposing their ideas on the East, sometimes without even visiting the region. As architects from the region started studying abroad, either at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris or in Germany, they brought functionalist architectural styles and