

THE IMPACT OF EUROPEANIZATION ON THE URBAN AND ARCHITECTURAL STYLISTIC EVOLUTION OF CAIRO DURING THE FIRST HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY

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Abstract

Urban design and architecture are intimately related fields, which generally intersect and overlap. As the main objective of this paper is to understand the influence of the urban planning process on the architectural outcome, this paper tackles this issue, trying to understand the dilemma of their practices. Therefore, this paper explores the Europeanization process in Cairo, which started during the first half of the 19th century, by the French Expedition originating Cairo to such a French model: “Paris of the Orient”. The Europeans and Muhammed Ali’s dynasty strategic endeavors to modernize Cairo according to the European model are analyzed, in order to examine the urban and architectural changes and development aspects, regarding the old traditional city, alongside with the foundation of the new modern one *al-Azbakiya*, which was the main city vital hub between 1798 till 1863. During such overlapping process of transition, a new field for research to be explored: the *Rumi* style, introduced by the royal patrons, then adopted by the local people, and which was an eclectic style, influenced by the Turkish and French Baroque features. While different foreign new building typologies also appeared during this period, the case study examines selected Cairene palatial, residential, and public buildings. Thereupon, the paper discovers the main characteristic features of the *Rumi* transitional style, which appears to have been the domineering architectural style until the second half of the 19th century; yet, the time of appearance of authentic European styles.

Keywords

Europeanization, Cairo, Urban, Architecture, Style

1. Introduction

“The metropolis annuls the previous history of architecture”¹. As the urban paradigm changes the prevailing architectural style also changes, almost in the same direction; hence, history of civilizations is recorded through the architectural heritage. Urban design and architecture are intimately related fields, which generally intersect and overlap. In other words, there is a strong and close relationship between good urban design and architecture, as they complement each other. Both are concerned with designing functional, aesthetic, and sustainable environments for people. Therefore, a sense of urban design is critical for creating good architecture. Architects create their schematic designs to conform with the urban planners decisions: what can be built, where, and how outdoor areas will be used.

The city urban and architectural changes or development did not move out of context or overnight. It has evolved along the urban timeline paradigm shifts. Both Egypt in general, and Cairo in particular, represent a typical example of such phenomenon of Europeanization in the

Middle East; since it was amongst the first countries to be in direct dominant contact with modern Europe. In fact, the French Expedition of Egypt constituted the start of a prominent, and inevitable tendency towards Europeanization. Actually, the influence of French taste on the urban, architecture, and even interior design since the 17th century was enormous. It was to England and France that all of Europe, and later America, looked for a sense of style and taste. It is also difficult to decide the exact boundary lines between one periodical style and another. It is an overlapping process of transition. As a consequence, there exists a transitional period in between, in which one can find a mix between different architectural styles. Actually, Cairo's city during the first half of the 19th century represent such status, by incorporating a Turkish Baroque (*Rumi*) style. It was introduced as an alternative to the extant one of the traditional city, which is a new field for research to be explored.

The paper methodology outlines the systematic approach taken to research, and analyzes historical urban and architecture context. It encompasses the selection of periods, collection of diverse sources, analytical frameworks employed, ethical considerations, and acknowledged limitations in the study. In order to examine the urban and architectural evolution that occurred to Cairo, this paper discusses the political, and socio-cultural conditions during the prelude of foreign impact of the French Expedition till Muhammad Ali's period (1798-1805). The urban planning achievements in the traditional city are also outlined, alongside with the foundation and development of the new modern city. This is followed by an analysis of the influences and achievements of the Egyptian royal dynasty, starting from Muhammad Ali's period till Muhammad Said (1805-1863). This includes the major events of that period, rulers' urban and architectural endeavors to conform to the European model, and the gradually increasing foreign interventions in the country which determined the different urban and architectural changes in Cairo and its suburbs. Finally, this paper ends with an analysis of Cairene palatial, residential, and public buildings during this period. Thereupon, the architectural characteristic features of this transitional style are noted.

2. Europeanization Process: Cairo's Urban and Architectural Change and Development Aspects (1798-1863)

This section provides a historical analysis of the different socio-cultural and political influences on Cairo's urbanism and architecture during the first half of the 19th century regarding the endeavors to conform to the European model. It delineates the Europeanization process of Egypt; and how such lead process originated Cairo to such a French model: "Paris of the Orient". Furthermore, the urban and architectural improvements in the traditional city are outlined, alongside with the foundation and development of the new city image and form.

2.1 Traditional City Urban Destruction with the Foundation of al-Azbakiya (1798-1805)

Before the French Expedition, *'Abdul Rahman al-Gaberti* stated that Cairo's city life was characterized to a great extent by unrest. He also noted that the Cairene alleys was in good condition; the *Suq* was the real city centre; traditional public buildings as bazaars, sabils and *wekalas*, were established. As for Bulaq, it remained the main harbor of Cairo. Many important persons also lived outside the Fatimid city, but the favorite places were those of the Nile and of *al-Azbakiya* lake². Accordingly, although considered a cosmopolitan city, it remained an oriental Islamic city, and no significant incidents had taken place during the prelude of the French Expedition, till it was heard of the advent of those new comers (*al-*

Afrang) to Egypt. Correspondingly, the French archaeologist and cartographer Edme-François Jomard, who edited the *Déscription de L'Égypte*, a member of the Napoleon's *Institut d'Égypte*, and also supervised Muhammad Ali's study missions sent to France; Jomard noted that the arrangement of the old city had hardly no resemblance to any European city. Not only were the streets and public squares extremely irregular; but the old city was almost composed of extremely short, broken, zigzagged streets with myriad dead ends, closed by doors opened by the inhabitants³ (Figure 1). So, the heart of Fatimid Cairo was hard to discover as a whole.



Figure (1): Map of Napoleon's Cairo, after the *Description De L'Égypte*, and Cairo's urban structure that remained an oriental and cosmopolitan city.

Source: *Déscription de l'Égypte*, 1809; Wikimedia, 2010; Wikimedia, 2023

Consequently, the French took several endeavors to revoke and diminish the old system of *Harat* (Figure 2). The houses, palaces, public buildings, even some parts of *al-Azhar* complex, and its adjacent buildings were demolished, which resulted in a notable resource of land, fit to establish the base for a new city west of the old one (Figure 3). These lands were potentials for constructing huge roads and squares, besides houses and shops yielding towards the European architectural style. There were definitely military and security reasons behind the attempt to remodel Cairo's old *Harat* system, besides the construction and regulating a number of more straight and large important communicating streets in the city. Amongst other French security proceedings, which had its impact on the deformation of the traditional city, was the demolition of built-in *Masatib*, which obstructed passage ways in the street market; and the removal of *hara* wooden gates⁴.

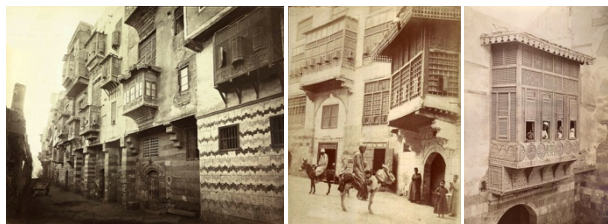


Figure (2): Old Cairo's street and architecture.

Source: Levantine H.F., 2023



Figure (3): French endeavors to revoke and diminish the old system.

Source: Levantine H.F., 2023; Wikipedia, 2018

When the French arrived, Napoleon stayed in *Muhammad Bek al-Alfi's* House at *al-Azbakiya* (Figure 4). Since, it became the main city centre, to the extent that Napoleon chose *al-Azbakiya* for the French National Day celebrations⁵. Europeans stayed in "*Hay al-Afrang*", adjacent to *al-Muski* and *al-Azbakiya* districts; they started taverns, inns, and cafés, which was the beginning of *al-Azbakiya*, with its European exclusive hotels and restaurants⁶. It had thus been the favorite district for both the French, and Egyptian upper class.

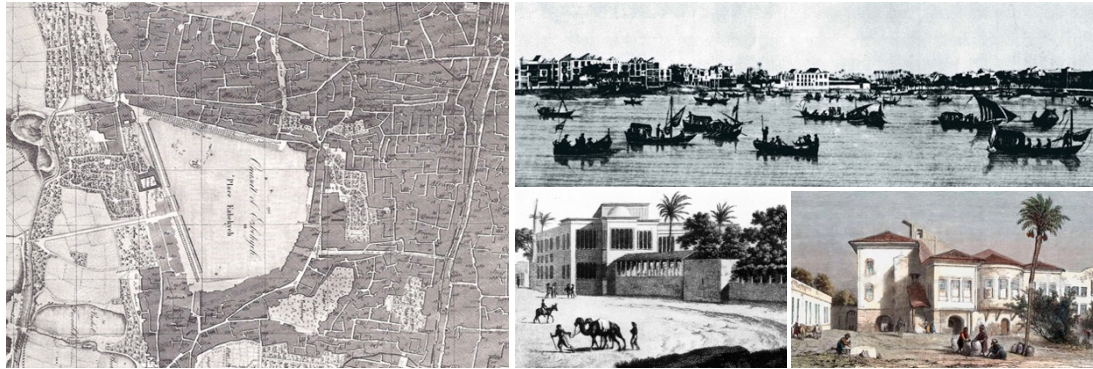


Figure (4): The western shore of al-Azbakiya Pond, with the palace of al-Alfi (Bonaparte's residence) in the middle. Saray Muhammed Ali and Saray Muhammed Bek al-Defterdar at the same place.
Source: *Déscription de l’Egypte*, 1809; Tamraz, 1994

Afterwards, in order to acquire more land for development, *al-Azbakiya* cemetery was removed; and the French prevented the flow of water into its lake to dry it up. Obligatory evacuation was also imposed; the Cairenes had to leave their houses for the French, who preferred to live together. Unfortunately, all outstanding houses and palaces overlooking *al-Azbakiya* lake were demolished in order to construct many roads that led to *Hay al-Afrang* occupied by the French⁷. However, the French also imposed a number of improvements on the street pattern of Cairo (Figure 5). The French urban planning included the destruction of many areas so as to construct a relatively large straight street, which was extended from *al-Azbakiya* to *Bulaq*. It is noteworthy that *al-Azbakiya* had always been the starting point for street projects. They were also planning to establish shops on the two sides of the street, and to set up open galleries, plant trees and form parks. This street was the base for the present 26 July Street (previously called *Fouad al-Awal* or *Bulaq Street*). Moreover, *al-Muski*, had always been the link between the traditional and modern cities.



Figure (5): The northern shore of *Azbakiya* Pond, the view shows the Coptic quarter, houses and palaces were demolished.
Source: Behrens-Abouseif, 1985; Clerget, 1934; Tamraz, 1994

Additionally, the French process became increasingly significant to the city features and its urban control. They divided the city into eight districts (*arrondissements*), which were known as *Tumn* (eighth)⁸. Even after the evacuation of the French, rulers of Egypt adopted the same policy and divisions till the present time. Moreover, *Al-Gaberti* delineates some urban planning development of the city; expressing an absolute satisfaction at the modern European procedure. He stressed that they were keen to design in straight geometrical lines – which possibly represent the early Neo-Classical style. The French also set a system according to which streets had to be regularly swept and watered. In addition, *Al-Gaberti* again expressed

admiration for the modern equipment and mechanism which save time, and cost less than common traditional techniques. His admiration of the French and modern age was extended to include English as well; he noted: “through what he had seen in England, including the art of architecture, enormous capitals, the luxurious life of people, opulent industry”⁹.

Consequently, the era of optional westernization of Egypt started, and the European generation became a model for a society tired of Turkish exploitation, and anxious for a better age based on justice and prosperity. Thus, the French Expedition ended the centuries of Egyptian isolation, towards the supremacy of European quality. Those strategic French modifications on Cairo’s physical form, and their socio-cultural aspects affected its urban character as well. A French historian wrote “If it were for the army alone they would have turned Cairo into a small Paris”¹⁰.

2.2 Muhammad Ali Dynasty Urban and Architectural Evolution of Cairo (1805-1863)

With the foundation of Muhammad Ali’s rule over Egypt, a new era of open-door policy with Europe started from Cairo. No less impressed by the power of Europe, he started a modern process characterized by radical breaks with tradition on the socio-cultural and economic levels, which had an effective impact on Cairo. Between 1813 to 1826, the khedive then carried on with his interest in *al-Nizam al-Gadid*¹¹, by sending 300 Egyptian upper class students to be educated in Paris in various fields, where architecture was one of the key branches of the program. Indeed, these missions, had a great influence on the receptivity to French culture and the European modern era. Many of the students, influenced by western ideas, desired to strive for the reform of Egypt¹². Therefore, Muhammad Ali’s achievements gives the impression that he might have been infatuated with the modern age theory.

In 1830, *Hassan al-Attar* – the Grand Imam of *al-Azhar*, and one of the key admirers for the French – was attracted to adopt the modern intellectual European model, as he was impressed by their progress¹³. Likewise, his disciple *Rifa’a al-Tahtawi*, wrote several books that recommended methods by which “new Egyptian” should seek; and he emphasized the need for modern education following the European system. He assured that Alexandria was part of Europe, as the Alexandrians spoke much Italian, Greek and French; besides the fact that the city looked like Marseilles. *Al-Tahtawi* also made an analogy between Cairo and Paris, as both of the two cities overlooked rivers, and there are islands located within their boundaries. He wrote: “I’m convinced that the French are more related to Arabs than Turks are, or any other races”¹⁴. Fascinated by the Parisian character, *al-Tahtawi* admitted that Paris was cleaner, and more exquisite than Cairo. He was also amazed at Paris huge and straight roads. From his viewpoint, Shubra street was a similar one in Cairo. Likewise, he portrayed Paris wide parks, cultural and recreational buildings, besides houses, which he believed to be ideal. He also mentioned the regulations of the rental buildings, and even the elongated French windows, which allow the passage of sufficient light and air. *Al-Tahtawi* was clearly affected by the architecture being carried out during the French Neo-Classicism period. The *Académie des Beaux-Arts* was one of the main factors that gave definite character to Paris in his time¹⁵. Through his detailed description, *al-Tahtawi* made clear that the cultured Cairenes could have acquired a general perspective of the modern city to be copied. In this respect, *al-Tahtawi* established the basis of the new modernization and nationalism movement, which was architecturally interpreted during the late 19th century in Egypt¹⁶.

Accordingly, the intellectual adaptation through *al-Tahtawi*'s description of Paris, as a prime model, and as being the modern city master plan, was decisive. This life style was called: *al-Nizam al-Gadid* (the new system). What impresses the visitor to modern sections of the city is its resemblance to Paris¹⁷. So, it is imprecise to assume that by the withdrawal of the French from Egypt, their impact came to an end; yet, Cairo kept on with being the chief place following the European French life style. Therefore, it is quite clear that the whole European influencing process managed to bring forward a prominent intellectual contribution, related to the change of the city community, in addition to the city structure.

The development of *al-Azbakiya* was of particular prominence for the whole of Cairo during the first half of the 19th century (Figure 6). Muhammad Ali initially dwelt at *al-Azbakiya*, which beside the Citadel and *Shubra* became the residence of his government. Moreover, Muhammad Ali and his successors completed works of construction at *al-Muski* street, linking between *al-Azbakiya* and the Fatimid city. This street was also the residence of Europeans, whom Muhammad Ali had appointed to work on his different developing projects. It became the commercial artery of the capital, and the centre for European trade (Figure 7). Edward Lane delineated *al-Muski* saying: "In this as well as in some of the neighboring streets, most of the shops are constructed and fitted up as in Europe, with glass fronts, and stocked with almost all the luxuries of western countries; these are occupied by Franks and Greeks"¹⁸. The European concentration in this area was a natural extension of the old French quarter, which had a great impact upon the development of this part of the city.



Figure (6): The development of *al-Azbakiya*, which was of particular prominence for the whole of Cairo from 1856, 1870, 1928 till 1945.

Source: Nickel, 2004; Azab & El-Sayeh, 2012



Figure (7): The modernized commercial *al-Muski* street linking between *al-Azbakiya* and the Fatimid city. It was also the residence of Europeans; and the centre for European trade.

Source: Iverson, 1994; Azab & El-Sayeh, 2012

In 1818, Muhammad Ali also started to establish a modern industrial and commercial centres around Cairo such as Bulaq. In 1832, a lot of construction work was executed; the digging of *Qanat al-Ismailiya* south of Bulaq, that was a decisive measure to overall master plan of the city¹⁹. Such accomplishment had its consequences on the development of the city, since *al-*

Khalig al-Misri, running along the western side of the Fatimid city, began to lose its value. Both *al-Khalig al-Misri* and *Qanat al-Ismailiya* have been transformed into streets during the 20th century (now called *al-Khalig* or Port Sa'id street, and Ramsis street respectively). Furthermore, Muhammad Ali issued a decree in 1837 to transform its lake and surroundings into a public European promenade; hence, it took four years to remodel it into a “*park à l'Européenne*”²⁰ (Figure 8). Although architectural measures to carry out this project had begun during his rule, it was not finished before *Ismail's* era²¹. This outstanding location had since become the vital hub of Cairo in its modern stage.

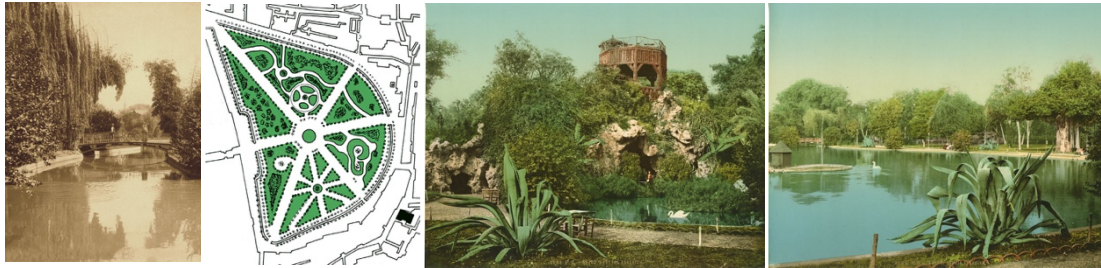


Figure (8): The remodel of *al-Azbakiya* lake and its surroundings in 1837 as a public European promenade “*park à l'Européenne*”.

Source: Rashed, 2015; Library of Congress, 2023

In 1847, Muhammad Ali established *Maglis Tanzim Misr al-Mahrusa*, an authority in charge of planning the city of Cairo, concerning the construction of new streets, the broadening and improvement of existing ones, street names and building numbers, and the introduction of modern transportation means²². It also ordered to close all the slaughter houses within the city, the sweeping of the markets, and the installation of lanterns outside shops²³. It began to take action toward developing and cleaning the streets, and eliminating the rubbish heaps around Cairo, out of *Bab al-Hadid*, and the West of the old city. This resulted in gaining more land to establish the future modern city.

In order to obtain construction materials, a state decree was issued to demolish and recycle the decrepit buildings. Therefore, all Cairene buildings were examined by a group of architects and inspectors, to decide whether to keep the building or to demolish it. *Al-Tahtawi* admitted that Muhammad Ali was extremely interested in architecture to the extent that he inspected the state-buildings himself. *Al-Gaberti* added that owners of houses were ordered to demolish and rebuild them; people thus suffered greatly of the high-cost of demolition and rebuilding²⁴. Lane wrote that Muhammad Ali had ordered to destroy the outdoor *Masatib* located in front of stores, so as to enlarge the streets, and to facilitate the flow of traffic; as the French had earlier begun. He also banned the use of traditional *Mashrabiya* in houses in order to decrease the risk of setting fire, he commanded that the *Saqifa* (sheds) made of bamboo mats, ought also to be removed and replaced²⁵, such as *al-Mu'iz* street at *al-Ghouriya*.

However, the most apparent example of a street cutting its way remorselessly through historic buildings is Muhammad Ali's street. Actually, much more expenses had been allocated for constructing this street, which joined the Citadel and *al-Ataba* square together at *al-Azbakiya* (Figure 9). This process represented some sort of a master plan, and an attempt to give rise to modern Cairo. Radical measures were sometimes taken to realize this scheme. Muhammad Ali set out to abandon the Oriental style and became modern²⁶. During this period, Cairo's

urban character was changing with unprecedented speed, vividly reflecting Muhammad Ali's policy to transform Cairo from a medieval city into a modern one.



Figure (9): Muhammad Ali's street, an example of a street cutting its way through historic buildings, to join the Citadel and *al-Ataba* square together at *al-Azbakiya*. This process represented some sort of a master plan, and an attempt to give rise to modern Cairo.

Source: Google map author analysis, 2023; La Fabrique du Caire Moderne, 2021; Scharabi, 1985

Furthermore, the Khedive Ibrahim gave orders to found botanical gardens between Bulaq and old Cairo. To the West of those gardens, he founded a palace overlooking the Nile, located at the site of the Garden City district. For this purpose, curved streets which were common in Europe with trees were constructed. In 1906, a private company bought Ibrahim's palace and its surrounding lands; to be subdivided²⁷; hence, Garden City was established, and became an attractive district in the second half of the 19th century. In 1849, a further urban project during Abbas's reign, was the creation of a military settlement: *al-Abbasiya* in the desert side²⁸. Later on, the new settlement was neglected in the reign of Said, who transferred the army forces to Qasr al-Nil, where the new barracks were built²⁹.

During this urban and social transition, and with the increase in the number of Europeans in Cairo, different new European-style building typologies were established in either the French or Coptic quarter, such as schools, hospitals, consulates, churches, post office, and hotels. Flaubert wrote the following: "Several days later, we left Hôtel d'Orient to stay at Hôtel du Nil"³⁰. One of the first was the Hôtel du Nil, on a side street of *al-Muski*; while Hôtel d'Orient was located at *al-Azbakiya* pond³¹. In 1849, Shephard opened his famous English hotel, on the same site of *al-Alfi* house overlooking *al-Azbakiya* lake. Nevertheless, the traditional *Khan* and *Wikala*, which still existed, began to lose their interest gradually; while the newly built hotels acquired further prominence³². Moreover, Britain was granted by the Khedive Abbas to construct a railway between Alexandria and Cairo, then to be extended to Suez to counteract the Suez Canal project³³. In 1854, *Bab al-Hadid* Railway Station became a base for a far reaching change in the whole city; so that construction work managed to expand out of the old city, due to the operation of such railway line.

3. Cairo's Urban and Architectural Development Transition (1805-1863): Rumi Style

The outlandish architectural evolution introduced into Egypt at the turn of the 18th century by *al-Alfi*'s house design was very distinct. The Europeanization of architectural forms and style was predominantly initiated by the royal family, and the upper class; by importing French styles and architects. The French architect Pascal-Xavier Coste; the Chief of Construction Works of Lower Egypt³⁴; spent ten years working for Muhammad Ali³⁵. *Ali Mubarak* – the Minister of Public Affairs – asserted that *al-Ahali* (citizens) had followed the lead of princes, and designed their houses on account of the Classical style of architecture. *Mubarak* has used

the term “*Mabani Rumiya*”³⁶. This architectural character became familiar in Cairo during this period, as the royal family was fond of building quasi-European palaces, which was totally alien to Cairo. The Ottoman architecture and ornaments, were influenced by the French Baroque style. By way of illustration, it was prohibited to build houses with *Mashrabiya* – or any traditional elements, and instead the Neo-Classical and Turkish styles were promoted. These Cairene buildings do not feature the slightest Mamluk architectural style.

Al-Gaberti has described the Royal family’s palaces, he reflects on the architecture, which he called the Greco-Roman (*Rumi*) form. He clarified the implication of this new style for Cairo without assessing it³⁷. Muhammad Ali due to his Albanian background probably preferred this new style. In *Al-Khutat al-Tawfiqiya al-Gadida li-Misr al-Qahira*, under the title: Features of the New Greco-Roman style, *Mubarak* pointed out that the people started following this stylistic model by building in the *Rumi* style (Figure 10). He considered that Muhammad Ali was the first ruler to introduce such a style into Egypt. *Mubarak* provides a full description of the elements of the new style, saying that people now follow the rules of Greco-Roman forms of architecture (*Al-Ashkal al-Rumiya*), and they avoid old construction designs, for the new method that is amazingly wonderful, and seems beautiful, besides it costed moderate money when compared with the old construction ones³⁸. *Mubarak* indicated no single disadvantage related to the new architectural style; in this way, he expressed the ideology of his age, which was distinguished by being more appropriate.

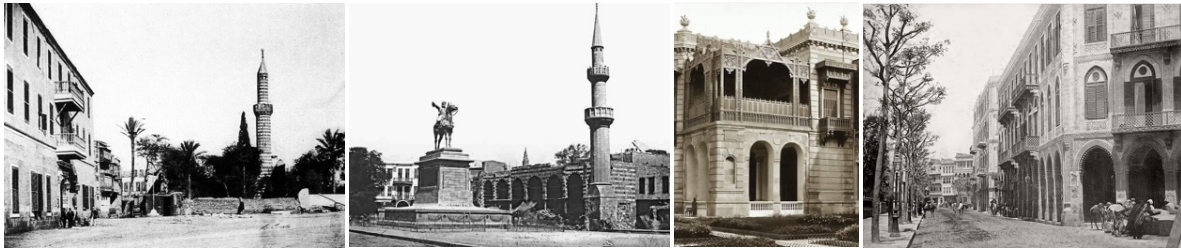


Figure (10): Urban and architectural character transition. The New Greco-Roman style: *al-Ashkal al-Rumiya*
Source: Rhoné, 1910; Volait & Crosnier Leconte, 1998; Scharabi, 1985

Mubarak criticized the old urban and architectural design, as there was an apparent negligence in its cleanliness; and *harat* were distorted by several corners and bends. He added that the traditional model was also achieved regardless good function, ventilation or lighting; hence, high humidity prevailed, and several diseases were widely spread. Conversely, most of new modern constructed houses were much more hygienic. Furthermore, *Mubarak* stated that *Mashrabiyyat* were virtually attached to each other; yet, according to the new style, it had been replaced by rectangular glass windows *Mubarak* denounced the old style house façades as they were not built according to any architectural codes, and used to look like funerary architecture. However, new styling façades followed geometrically regular shapes, and are divided into vertical and horizontal levels by protruding cornices; to form shadows on both width and height, which increased the elegance and glamour of buildings³⁹.

As regards interior comparative analysis, *Mubarak* carried on that new rooms were either rectangular or square; on the contrary, the traditional *Qa'a* (main hall) occupied the biggest area; rooms’ levels were of different heights, so one would go up and down to move along; and traditional furniture did not allow enough space for tidiness or arrangement. Contrary to this, modern styling rooms were of the same ground level at each floor, which made the

whole place more spacious; staircases were to be more comfortable; and ceramic cladding used in *Qa'a*, *Durqa'a* and *Hammam* has been replaced later by black and white marble tiles. Traditional decorative wooden ceilings with stalactites were abandoned, as their manufacture took months or years, and their cost was equal to the entire house. These ceilings were replaced by a flat one with hollowed cavities painted and hand drawn⁴⁰. To presume, the architectural stylistic evolution changed with the advent of large numbers of Europeans to Egypt. Subsequently, the *Rumi* style which was started during the first half of the 19th century by the royal patrons, was also preferred and developed by them in the second half of the century. Egyptians started following the Royal family's example by building in the *Rumi* style, and put aside the traditional oriental one, because they found the new one more effective, cheerful, well organized, as well as economical.

On the other hand, European travellers have described the change of urban and architectural character in Cairo, as they spent their Winter vacations in the *Orient*, and visit the Pharaonic monuments. Edward Lane noted: "Yet this art, of late years, much declined, like most others in this country; a new style of architecture, partly Oriental and partly European, and of a very plain description, being generally preferred". Lane added "Windows with European sashes of glass, each with a sash of close trellis-work outside the lower half, have lately become common in new houses, in many parts of Cairo. They are mostly houses built in the Turkish style, more or less approaching to European fashions, not well adapted to a hot climate". Lane, to express that the country is still in a transitional stage which are also reflected in the city structure and architecture, wrote: "Cairo has, in consequence, lost much of its Arabian aspects"⁴¹. Lane's previous quotes, literally signifies the creation of an eclectic style, resulting of Turkish and Neo-Classical styles. Lorent described the gate of Soliman Pasha's house, as it seems more interesting to him. He said: "it proves that although the East has started to be in a state of complete fusion with the West, and to be abstracted from all its distinguishing characteristics, the essence of the former Arab art has not entirely died out yet"⁴². Clot-bek stated that the style of construction had been entirely modified lately. He compared between a traditional house with *Mashrabiya*, and *Malqaf* to those concurrent, he said: "Since some years, the system of constructions has been vastly modified. Still, another artistic one, namely *Constantinopolitan* style is now adopted: Such a style was a mere copy or miserable mixture of moderate Greek style degenerated with some Arab artistic elements. According to this conception, so many wooden buildings were erected; windows are replaced by large rectangular ones; besides, the luxuriance of the arabesques is replaced by plane surfaces"⁴³. What he described as the *Constantinopolitan* style was obviously the *Rumi* style.

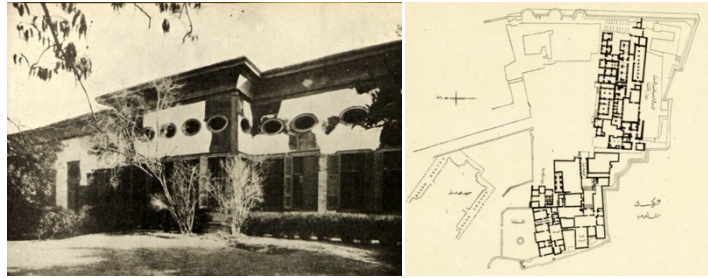
Accordingly, the Egyptian fascination with modernizing Cairo in the early 19th century contradicts with foreigners' sympathy for traditional Cairo. Egyptians aimed for progress and development, while foreigners empathized with preserving the city's heritage and cultural identity. This difference in perspectives reflects varying attitudes towards modernization, and the value placed on preserving cultural heritage.

4. Cairo's Palatial, Residential, and Public Rumi Style During the Period from Muhammad Ali till Sa'id (1805-1863): Selected Examples

This part traces an analytical survey of the different *Rumi* style of selected Cairene palatial, residential, and public buildings during the period from 1805 till 1863. Thereupon, the characteristic features of this transitional style, try to brief this classification.

4.1 Al-Gawhara Palace (the Kushk)

Built after 1812 on same site of demolished Mamluk buildings. The morphological form is irregular as a result of site. The style is classical, but with an Ottman feature oval-shaped windows superimposed on large rectangular windows. The main entrance on the western side of the court is a projecting room carried on columns⁴⁴, the roof of which is topped with a curved hood⁴⁵.



4.2. Qasr al-Harem

Built in 1827, composed of three wings. The largest eastern wing had a carved marble door in Ottoman and Baroque mixed motifs. The first and second floors of this wing are built of limestone, while the third floor is of brick. A typical feature was the undulating portion of the façade. It seems to have been a feature of an Istanbulli influence.



4.3 Saray Shubra

Founded in 1808-1827, overlooking the Nile, the pyramids and Cairo. Muhammad Ali encouraged the elite to establish their palaces and Summer residences alongside, as a start of a new suburb. He brought Turkish architects to plan the parks, for construction, and decorations. The most prominent feature of the palace is the semi-circular hood in the corner of the *Kushk*. French Baroque excessive ornaments, incline to the Egyptianization of some details.



4.4 Saray Abbas in al-Abbasiya

The Saray followed the Rumi style with its irregular plan and projections. It has a curved wooden cornice and a wooden frieze delinating each story. Fredinand de Lesseps, in 1855, was startled by its huge size, and noted that it had 2000 windows⁴⁶.



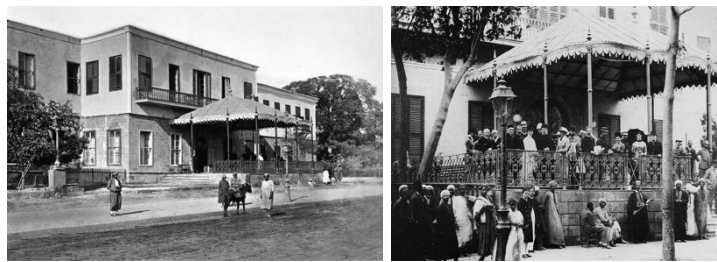
4.5 Residential and commercial house at al-Muski Street

These houses have a projection on its upper floor which refers to local traditional architecture, and simple façades. The Neo-Classical style influence is apparent in the slightly projecting moldings bordering rectangular windows, cornices, single projecting balconies with cast ironed balustrades, and simple decoration motif used below



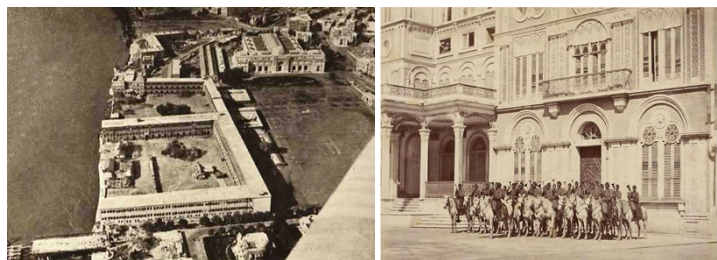
4.6 The Shepherd’s Hotel

In 1849, it was built on the site of al-Alfi house⁴⁷. It was known as *al-Fundug al-Biritani al-Gadid* (the New British Hotel, and later Shepherd’s British Hotel). It was famous for its terrace, covered with canavas canopy on wooden truss, which was the meeting point of the Frankish Cairo in the afternoon, and a delightful lounge⁴⁸.



4.7. Qasr al-Nil Barracks

By the 1850’s, Said Pasha had built the Barracks. Its style is of the generic Islamic style, with a European touch. It is a three-storey, massive freestanding double U-shaped wings, producing two forecourts. Its modular arcaded gallery-type balconies recalls Parisian architecture. The use of various types of windows traced stylized eclectic styles. This building existed till the 1940’s, where the Nile Ritz-Carlton now stands.



4.8 Rumi Style Architectural Characteristics Features

1. Straight plain façades with several single projecting balconies.
2. Usually two-storied buildings with a wooden frieze outlining the floors.
3. They have large, vertically elongated windows, either with or without shutters.
4. Most have no gabled roofs; yet, a wooden cornice adorned the top of the building.
5. In most case, there is a clear distinction between each floor, which is emphasized by a decorative, or structural wooden molding.
6. Façades were full of windows, with a protruding wooden cavetto separating the stories.
7. Some parts of the façade would be projecting, or at least some rooms project in the shape remotely resembling of the projecting Mashrabiya.

Accordingly, the dominant style in the first half of the 19th century was of clear Neo-Classical French and Ottoman influence, the *Rumi* style, in which the French Neo-Baroque and Turkish influence and characteristic features are obvious. Likewise, the local population followed the *Rumi* style throughout the century.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Without political rulers patronizing urban, architecture, and art in an affinity toward European styles, and without the European Colonial influences, the rapid change in Cairene character would never have occurred in such dramatic and flagrant results. There was a series of regulatory procedures carried out by the French and later on by Egyptian rulers, which were of utmost importance, concerning the different urban and architectural city development, in both the traditional and modern cities. By the French Expedition, the Europeanization of the Middle East and the era of voluntary westernization of Egypt started. Moreover, it ended the centuries of isolation of Egypt, and drew it inexorably into the arena of domination of European quality. The French occupation, which severely damaged large sections of the traditional Cairo, yet established the base for a new city west of the old one, and which continued to be the chief place that was following the French life style. So, those strategic French changes on Cairo's urban form and aspects affected its socio-cultural character as well turn Cairo into a small Paris.

Furthermore, it is obvious that the influences of the early stage of Europeanization came into sight from two channels: firstly, the presence and participation of Europeans with Muhammad Ali and his successors besides the Egyptian upper class. Secondly, the study missions to Paris during his reign, which had a great influence on the receptivity to the European modern era; therefore, to bring forward a change of the city structure and community. This process represented some sort of a master plan, and an attempt to give rise to modern Cairo, outside the traditional city, following new western character. During this period, Cairo's character was changing with unprecedented speed, vividly reflecting Muhammad Ali's policy to remodel Cairo from an oriental city into a modern one resemblant to Paris. This clearly demonstrates that both local and foreign parts were working on the Europeanization of Egypt in general, and of Cairo's cosmopolitan image in particular. In that period of fast transition, the presence of the traditional and modern life styles drove the Egyptians to a dilemma; as the new life increasingly appealed to them. Thereupon, the old city began to lose its attractiveness while the new modernization concept had a conclusive pull. New Cairo represented the welfare, because its constructive planning and architectural style were the only asset that the Cairenes managed to benefit from the West.

Accordingly, the transitional *Rumi* style (Greco-Roman) was an eclectic style influenced by both Turkish and French Baroque styles, which was started by the royal patrons, then adopted by the local people during the first half of the 19th century. People started building in the *Rumi* style and put aside the traditional one, because they found the new one more effective, well organized as well as economical. Furthermore, the *Rumi* style appears to have been the domineering style in Cairene palatial residential and public architecture until the second half of the 19th century; yet, the time of appearance of authentic European styles such as Neo-Classical, Neo-Baroque and Art Nouveau styles was later on.

Nowadays, the architectural design is mainly based on city urban planning and design, and will directly affect it. City planning and design should competently be aware from the latest architectural design concepts and technology; whilst, architecture should move and progress with city planning and design, in order to promote the harmony and unity of the city image. Architectural design should consider the requirements of urban planning, in order to be consistently coordinated.

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