

The Identity of the Cairene Public Space: Manifestations of Social and Architectural Heritage in the City Square of Medieval Cairo

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Abstract : Cairo has been famous for the unique identity of its medieval architecture, which was formed by multiple dynasties that ruled Egypt. However, only a few researches were done on the identity of its public space. This paper links both the architectural and the socio-political aspects of the Cairene public space and studies how they affected each other. The subject of the study is Maydan Salah al-Din, the main city square of medieval Cairo, which reveals a quite useful information, not only about the architectural identity of the Cairene public space but also about the socio-political patterns that operated within. The analytical framework is based on Lefebvre's theory, the 'production of space', in which he applied 'the Hegelian dialectic' in order to understand how the social practice forms the space, and how, in turn, the space forms the social practice. This framework offers a comprehensive understanding of the identity of the Cairene public space, which does not separate architecture from the social practice.

Keywords : architectural identity, Cairene public space, Islamic architectural history, production of space

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