The present work looks into the complex issue of architectural references and visual sources in new community developments, and the closely related notion of invoking, recalling and exploiting traditional and historic styles in touristic projects; as safe means of securing and combining quality, identity and instant appeal. It addresses the roles of the involved actors in deciding on appearance in development scenarios; emphasising cultural disparity and illusive visual preferences, and pointing out the need for liberal and enlightened development control. The work; backed by earlier research and a two folds research project, poses critical questions and a set of propositions, to allow better understanding and suggest further investigation of architectural heritage incorporation into physical and touristic developments.

PRELUDE

Tourism was (and still is) generally accepted as a reliable economic base in Egypt's drive for comprehensive development since the late Nineteen Fifties and till the present. The past two decades witnessed a steady rise in tourism and related development activities. The physical manifestations of the growing interest, investments and achievements in tourism are evident and easy to follow in; the growth axes and integrated regional development zones designated to tourism, as well as the escalating numbers of touristic projects, resorts, villages, hotels and other leisure facilities.

The colossal volume of rapidly executed touristic development activities coupled with the relatively limited earlier local experience in comprehensive and large scale touristic development, spontaneous and planned, public and private; posed and faced the issue of physical/architectural appearance; in other words, the identity and character of newly developed schemes. The issue of external appearance or adopted architectural features and treatments, recently gained remarkable importance in spite of its apparent marginality
and seemingly superficial nature; because of the interaction of a number of closely related factors, including:
- The Marketability of touristic development, and the hot competition between developers in attracting and meeting potential demand (users, buyers and tourist agents..etc.) to the product (buildings & settings),
- The emergence (and growing awareness) of the conceptions and mechanisms of contextuality and conservation of natural and physical resources, in architecture, urban and community design,
- The collective rise of culture, tradition and heritage as a collective notion, objective and means in societal, political and physical development.

Furthermore architectural appearance and "uniqueness", identity and distinct character of new buildings and environs, in the post-modern epoch, overshadowed function and utility; becoming an end in itself, loaded with intangible associations, cultural dimensions, symbolism, prejudices and whims.

On a more immediate level, architectural appearance in spite of its inherent complexities is readily accessible to all, regardless of specialization, status, idiosyncrasies and prejudices. This is particularly valuable in looking into the three involved-most actors in the touristic development game, namely:
- the developer/owner/controller.
- the form-maker: designer/professional.
- the end user (actual or potential)/community.

Facades and the external outlook of buildings can be read, grasped, evaluated and criticized by all/every body; the results of such interaction is then carried through and labeled/extended to the entire development. Facades and appearance are also regarded as the key to the quality and (personality) identity of physical developments.

There is, as indicated above, a general acceptance of the importance of differentiation, distinction and uniqueness in marketing architectural products in the days and age of advanced technology, mechanical repetition and mass production.

Architectural heritage; the stock of excellence, whether historic, traditional or vernacular, provided an invaluable means in tackling the dilemma and challenges of contextuality, differentiation and market-appeal. The said stock (formal and popular) of buildings, components treatments and finishes provided the designer, at little or no cost, with a formal/configurative language and expressions associated with the community (people and place); hence both satisfied and met the images and expectations of the other two (actors) poles of the development trio; i.e. the developer/controller and the user/consumer of tourism and products.

Traditional forms, stereotype treatments, combinations and details were thus recalled, copied, transformed, applied, misused and exploited into modernistic, almost completed configurations. Architectural heritage was generally abused and confused, with few limited exceptions, where its essence, physical and symbolic, was incorporated into the form generation process and successfully reflected in the final outcome; generated/realized forms and settings. The creative and committed endeavors in invoking and interacting with architectural heritage are over-shadowed and engulfed by: mediocrity and superficiality, the kitsch and obvious, blind copying and eclectic
compositions. The vogue of the tradition related products and the absence of critical evaluation on the one hand and the cultural dimensions inherent in the processes of form generation and touristic development on the other further complicated the issue in hand: i.e. heritage in development.

Cultural disparity and conflicts, hidden and declared, among the involved actors: developer/controller, designer/professional and users /communities, were hardly addressed or seriously investigated; and though the same words are used and common grounds are defined as regard heritage and tradition invocation and incorporation; there exists a wide gap separating the actors' conceptions, understanding and visual references and associations. Cultural disparity and said gap also extends and separates; the parties involved in tourism, here and there, the local and the other.

The present discourse addresses the complicated issues of the visual appearance of touristic developments within the framework of culture and heritage, in an attempt to answer the urging interrelated questions: who dictates the vocabulary and visual messages of new development, its architecture and settings?, and what are the causes (stresses) behind the evolving architecture, in new resorts and touristic projects?.

The discourse benefits from the research into the issues of character, townscape and physical aesthetics and, culture and heritage supervised and undertaken by the authors during the past two decades at Cairo University, Egypt. It also exploits the findings of a limited research project carried out in two graduate courses by postgraduate students reading for the Diploma and Master of Architecture, during the first and second terms of the academic year 1997-1998, under the supervision of the authors. The project looked into various aspects of the issue in hand, including:

- Visual references, image and perception of the language of form,
- Consumption and reuse of tradition and heritage, and
- The roots, causes/ and reasons behind formal and visual expression.

With the limitation and nature of the present setting in mind, this work is structured into five, almost independent and yet closely related segments; including this prelude which introduces the other four parts, namely:

- On the key words and notions, reintroducing the obvious - appearance, builtscape, heritage, tradition and character.
- On culture, tradition invocation and form, propositions and questions - cultural disparity in touristic developments
- Interlude: A research project into the roots of appearance, in touristic settings.
- Epilogue: Development control and heritage exploitation.

REINTRODUCING THE OBVIOUS; ARCHITECTURAL APPEARANCE, TRADITION AND CHARACTER IN NEWLY DEVELOPED TOURISTIC PROJECTS IN EGYPT

The issue of the architectural treatment of facades and settings in general, may simply be approached on the grounds of deciding on visual vocabulary and combinations
(language); where invoking tradition and architectural heritage will simply become the incorporation of related vocabulary, motives and themes into the new developments and architectural forms.

In touristic developments the importance of marketability of the built products; architecture and settings, and the closely related emphasis on identity, quality and appeal; collectively bring together the notions of appearance, heritage and character. An appearance that is unique and distinct appeals to and attracts potential users and communities. Identity and uniqueness, in turn are closely related to the conceptions of character and excellence (in tradition and heritage).

The terms are used and seem common enough to the involved parties as well as to those following and evaluating physical development (general and touristic) and its outcome. It is becoming generally accepted that; "character" and "identity" can be attained in new developments, through the creative manipulation of "heritage" and "tradition" into architectural treatment and compositions. This is stated as if character is well defined and readily accessible, as well as the notions and contents of tradition and heritage, not to mention the complexities of architectural appearance and builtscape.

All is (thus) casually approached and addressed and the obvious becomes vague and illusive, undefined and incomprehensible, hence it is imperative to reintroduce and combine the illusive notions of appearance, heritage and character if the issue of invoking and reusing tradition is to be seriously investigated.

External appearance is the accessible-most in built-settings; it is arguably the tangible and the physical that can be seen and touched. It comprises; facades and components, the space between buildings and masses as well as urban/built fabric (or tissue), solids and voids and form morphology. External appearance is (almost) synonymous to the notions of builtscape (townscape) and visual architectural character of physical (urban) developments. It comprises the ingredients of architectural composition, as well as the elements and components of the collective builtscape and character (1).

In other words external appearance is the result of the play with and interaction of architectural elements in a single building on one level and the interrelations of juxtaposed buildings on another level, as well as the relation between the collective built form and the settings on a third level (2).

In large scale projects, appearance of builtscape is usually the responsibility of one designer (or a design team); i.e. the result of conscious and determined mental, creative and technical efforts.
Physical architectural character is usually attached to urban settings where the builtscape is the resultant of collective architectural work of different builders, a more complex notion than mere architectural appearance, as it is the relatively uncontrolled product of community work and interaction between buildings and the setting; and where architects and professionals are instruments and actors in the complex building game. In those
settings appearance is the collective responsibility of the society at large, professionals included.

Culture and cultural variability is always present whether it is a matter of a single, well defined touristic project or an expansive builtscapes comprising a multitude of developments. The various levels of culture from the hidden to the exposed, direct and indirect as well as values and prejudices, references and evaluation scales, invariably emanate and influence development processes and actions through the involved actors (3).

Heritage and tradition architectural and otherwise are integral part of the cultural setting that influences form generation activities directly and indirectly. Recalling (revitalizing) heritage and tradition became lately an effective means in mobilizing societal will in comprehensive development drives (4); which suffered for decades from general deficiency and absence of societal support and involvement. Heritage and tradition were thus exploited and integrated in the conceptions of independent and sustainable development (5).

In the post modern era in architecture and urbanism it is becoming acceptable and commendable to turn to the setting, context, community culture, traces and built heritage for visual references, for borrowing, copying, developing and enhancing. Tradition and heritage products, themes; hence turned into a source book for all to approach, use and misuse (6). In essence it provided an easy tool for claiming uniqueness, distinction and differentiation as it combines the inherent merits of links to communities and locales.

The chains linking builtscapes, appearance, visual character, culture, heritage and tradition, may be followed, with relative difficulty, through the actors involved in the building process and development, touristic and otherwise. The difficulties and complications are due to the number of actors involved as well as the differences among them, regarding the most basic; e.g. what is worthwhile in tradition and heritage? and what to pick and select from the stock of excellence? .

Invoking tradition and heritage in building and development is an illusive and controversial issue (7). Apart from direct copying and restoration of wholes (buildings and settings) where the origin and the clone are physically identical (or almost); recalling and manipulating tradition is as abstract and relative as the notions of: perception, understanding, image, visual references of tradition and heritage, physical and nonphysical (8).

PROPOSITIONS

Current and recent research into the labyrinths of: development, culture, tradition, heritage and character of locales; enables us to put-forward a number of developed queries and propositions that are challenging and controversial, open ended and flexible.
The propositions collectively cast light onto the issue in hand, helping in analysing its facets and contents and allowing critical investigation and better understanding. The propositions though closely related; may be approached, discussed and assessed separately.

- The main reasons for turning to the traditional and historic in touristic developments include:
  - The importance of identity and differentiation in marketing architectural products,
  - The negative nature and the adverse effects of Modernism and products; placeless, faceless, internationality / universality (9).
  - Contextuality; i.e. recalling solutions and features that proved to be environmentally and Functionally sound (10); e.g. Fenestration size and location (porosity), heat resistance, passive cooling and ventilation, privacy provision, taming sunlight and glare etc.
  - Availability of funding and relative financial ease.

- The traditional and historic images provide safer solutions for appearance and identity, acceptable by most; in comparison to other visual andconfigurative trends, visual fashions and whims, e.g. deconstruction, high tech alternatives and the like.

- The traditional and historic have three clear and direct merits:
  - Symbolic, romantic and dogmatic/practical associations; to communities, locations, people and places.
  - Visual references availability and accessibility (11); tradition provides live/real models at the disposal of the actors during the different stages of development.
  - Inherent quality.

- Turning to tradition and heritage in form generation and architectural treatments poses six problems, namely:
  - Cultural disparity and variability among the involved parties; i.e. distance separating images, perceptions and understanding of culture and products; physical and nonphysical heritage (12).
  - Limitations of the visual language and artistic and architectural background and command; among the involved parties/actors; ability to express and discuss visual objectives during brief formulation and form generation stages.
  - Relative freedom in picking and selecting from tradition and heritage (a bazaar free for all); freedom to borrow, invoke, eclect; freedom almost without rules or limits (13).
  - The ability of the designer; invoking tradition /heritage in a new composition for contemporary uses under different development pressures, calls for outstanding creative and intellectual abilities to be able to exploit and manipulate a distinguished product, or part there of (14).
- The need for orchestration, control of architectural and physical products; even if quality is guaranteed, juxtaposing excellence does not necessarily lead to excellent settings or builtscapes. Quality development control is absence and hard to attain.
- Interacting with tradition under the pressure of fast tracking development; is likely to favor the kitsch and the obvious, superficial and immediate (15).

INTERLUDE: TWO RESEARCH PROJECTS

The two research projects were carried out in two classes in the post graduate Architectural Program at Cairo University combining the second year students of the post graduate Diploma in Architectural Design and the readers for Masters Degree in Architecture; under the supervision of the authors during the academic year 1997-1998. The two classes, namely: Development Control-an Introduction to Urban Design and Applied Research: Urban Studies Unit, comprised a total of some 45 graduate students.

Two separate briefs were prepared and treated as independent entities for practical and procedural purposes, as each was related to an independent course, and to allow for the possibility of changes in the students joining each course. The first brief was introduced during the first term (Autumn/Winter) in the Development Control class and the second brief was introduced at the start of the second term (Spring) in the Urban Studies unit of the Applied Research program.

The two briefs complemented each other, and together covered many aspects of the issue in hand, the first brief (the Introductory) introduced the problem, raised the questions and asked for proposals to address the issue; while the second brief allowed the elaboration and application of the proposals.

Part 1: The Introductory Brief
The brief was entitled: Architectural and Urban Form Determinants - On the issue of reviving and consuming tradition. It emphasized a number of sub-issues and conceptions; including:
- The difference in visual and cultural references of the actors in development scenarios.
- The end users and target communities the touristic development and luxury residences; definition and features.
- Marketing as a prime objective in touristic development projects.
- Proliferations of architectural treatments exploiting; alien styles and prototypes as well as local and regional historic, traditional and vernacular architecture.
- Deciding on adopted treatment and architectural character; who is responsible?

The research project had the following objectives:
- To review and document examples of the architectural vocabulary, townscape features and aesthetics of recent touristic projects and luxurious residences (during the past two decades).
To follow and establish the pressures behind it.
- To identify the roles of developers/owners/controllers, designers (Architect/Urban Designer) and end users/consumers; in shaping and formulating the appearance of the physical products (architecture and settings).
- To put forward a methodology for addressing the issue of form and deciding on forms with emphasis on four aspects:
  - The development context.
  - Features and character, townscape and architecture of the selected projects.
  - Form origins and causes/determinants.
  - Views, visual references of the involved parties: the architect, developer and end user.

The context/scope focused on high income and touristic developments in Egypt during the past two decades. The research tasks comprised:
- The selection of the field study subject: a building, a group of buildings, or high income luxurious residences or touristic development.
- Recording of architectural form and settings.
- Surveying the users reaction to form: image and perception, understanding, views and assessment.
- Interviewing the designers and developers; to follow the reasons behind the adopted form and treatment of the selected development.

Part 2: The Applied Research Brief
The second research project complemented the introductory research project, it allowed the research groups to present and discuss their work, providing an opportunity for evaluation, elaboration and enhancement. It was designed to allow the research teams to closely look at the selected projects and to concentrate on one or more of its components to fulfill the indicated research objectives.

Three aspects were spelled out in detail as research objectives and tasks to be undertaken by the research groups:
- To readdress the conceptions and definitions of the stock of excellence (heritage and tradition) and visual, architectural and urban references influencing form and form generation.
- To trace and point out agreement and conflict among the actors: as regard appearance and built form and visual references: historic heritage and traditional.
- To juxtapose and compare form origins (sources) and new developments (architecture and settings).

Research Results and Findings
The research work covered a variety of recent luxury housing and touristic projects, in Egypt. The luxury residential developments were mostly in the new settlements and towns in and around Greater Cairo, including: New Cairo Communities: Settlements 1, 3 & 5, Six October and Sheikh Zayed New Towns. The touristic projects were mostly in Sharm El Sheikh, Southern Sinai and in Hurghada on the Red Sea cost. Samples of the
graphic material included in the submitted research portfolios are grouped in (FIGURES 1-5).

The results of the two intertwined research projects; directly or indirectly supported the earlier propositions, and pointed out the following:

- The appearance and the builtscapes of the new touristic and leisure developments may be classified from the viewpoint of tradition, local culture and heritage awareness, invocation and manipulation into two main streams, namely:
  - Interactive/sympathetic stream; that accepts, seeks and adopts tradition and heritage sources.
  - Rejectionist/unsympathetic stream; that ignores and/or rejects tradition and heritage.

The two streams collectively comprise a number of directions and common practices:

- The interactive stream, includes:
  - Mediocre, insensitive, naive, and adhoc manipulation of traditional forms and elements.
  - Direct and extensive copying and (almost) holistic regeneration of traditional and historic buildings and settings.
  - Eclectic and selective; sensitive incorporation of elements, motives and details into modern and contemporary architectural forms and configurations.
  - Sophisticated, superior (advanced), synthesizing and analytic; it incorporates the essence, symbolism and hidden dimensions of the traditional, historic and vernacular into the new.

- The rejectionist/unsympathetic stream, includes:
  - Contextually aware, functional and environmentally positive and responsive.
  - International, modernistic, trendy and non-committed.

- The predominant visual styles; historic, traditional and heritage sources and origins; may be classified as follows:
  - Local styles:
    - Historic: Ancient Egyptian (Pharaonic), Islamic.
    - Regional: Mediterranean, Moroccan, Middle Eastern.
    - Followers/Disciples of Hassan Fathy's (16), (and the lesser known regionally and internationally; Ramses Weisa Wasef's (17)) style and idiosyncrasies; i.e. combining the historic and the indigenous.
  - Alien styles:
    - European Neo Classic, Colonial.
    - Exotic, Far Eastern, Indonesian etc.

- The involved actors, roles and influence:
  - Developers included: Local, regional, international investors.
  - Designers were mostly Local, international and joint.
  - End users/consumers comprised: Local, regional and alien communities.
The developers invariably dictated the target appearance for the projects; the final visual character (with varying precision) was always part of the client brief to the designer.

Earlier successful touristic developments influenced developers and designers; as regard appearance and adopted styles.

The prime and preferred target consumer and end user invariably was (and still is) the foreign (international) tourist; and his projected expectations were seriously considered in deciding on appearance and style of developments.

An indigenous traditional or historic image, appearance and settings together with quality service are the key to marketability of touristic projects.

A successful design experiment (well marketed project) guarantees future demand/new commissions to the designer.

The Designer:
- Most architects designed to meeting the clients' views.
- Few initiated the adopted styles and trends and convinced the client later.
- Most architects adopted approaches; exploited the features of a selected traditional or historic source, mostly eclectic, juxtaposing features and elements; together with their idiosyncrasies, personal interpretation of the original, tradition and heritage. An architect cannot but be himself, (FIGURES 1-5).

The End User:
- Egyptians/locals appreciated the complexity and general traditional outlook; objected to domes and vaults (like the Gourna's community in Hassan Fathy's experiment) locally associated to cemeteries and tombs' architecture. They equally did not like the interiors, low ceilings, arched openings (against which one might hit his head) and the built beds that accentuated the tomb's image.
- Alien users, enjoyed the adopted traditional and historic styles; appreciated the new visual experience and welcomed the romantic venture, setting character and exoticism.

EPILOGUE

It is evident that invoking, exploiting and manipulating tradition is a prevailing feature in new touristic (and luxury residential) developments in Egypt. Touristic projects provide an excellent opportunity for studying the phenomenon and related facets, issues and conceptions. The study of culture, tradition and heritage and new developments (form, architecture and settings) interrelation will be invaluable in other community development realms, including, preservation, development control and urban conservation of historic and heritage areas.
FIGURE 1. Architectural character, appearance and ingredients; ElNadaa (Dew) Neighbourhood, Sheikh Zayed New City, Egypt (Top), (18), and ElWoroood (Roses) Neighbourhood, Sixth of October New City, Egypt, Architects (Bottom), (19).
FIGURE 2. Architectural character, appearance and ingredients; recording and analysis, ElGouna Resort, Hurghada, Egypt: Movenpick Hotel (Left),(20), and Memphis Villas (Right),(21).
FIGURE 3. Architectural character, appearance and ingredients; recording and analysis, ElGouna Resort, Hurghada, Egypt: Kafr ElGouna (Left), (22) and Sheraton Miramar (Right), (23).
FIGURE 5. Collective facades, appearance and ingredients, Sheraton Miramar, ElGouna Resort, Hurghada, Egypt; heights, skylines, rhythm and porosity (Left), the Designer's architectural vocabulary and elements in earlier projects and at ElGouna,(23).
The directive of invoking tradition in newly developed touristic projects in spite of its materialistic and cost-return framework; is loaded with many interesting and challenging notions and should not be aborted nor discouraged. Positive - most among which are; resort to contextuality, awareness and respect of development contexts and related community (place and culture), the drive for continuity and avoidance of change for its own sake as well as the critical evaluation of heritage and tradition.

On another level; recalling tradition enhances the tendencies to addressing touristic development in spite of global pressures; as a private and independent process, carrying the traces of the community.

Tackling the issue of tradition revival in development process provides a parallel opportunity for investigating the illusive issues of: culture, heritage, character, visual language and community reaction, in the pluralistic phase engulfing the world community in general and the developing countries in particular. It further allows an opportunity to answer the nagging questions; who owns (influences) the language of architecture? is there a language, if the vocabulary are read differently and the meaning are disputed by the readers, actors and involved communities.

The collective language of architecture and the exploitation of tradition in turn pose the issue of control of development, in touristic projects. Development control becomes a must to protect the environment and resources and to safeguard against selfishness and greed, mediocrity and misuse. Successful tourism is based on continuity and cyclic progress; it should not be allowed to self destruct even temporarily as a result of negative life cycles or failure to attract users or damage to the environment.

Development control may thus be regarded as an integral part of the issue in hand; i.e. manipulating tradition in development contexts. In other words, should a fourth player/actor be added to the trio involved-most in development, to protect the collective interest and rights of local communities and the society at large; as well as those involved. Development control against; kitsch, heritage defacing, environmental degradation and wasting resources.

Development control in the present discourse is meant to closely look into the issue of visual character and appearance, beside the other aspects it conventionally handles; e.g. density, heights, coverage, provision for access, biological and health related factors etc... In the areas of outstanding landscape or urban value and heritage areas; the role of development control is to protect the setting's merits and potential and to preserve and enhance physical and architectural character. Its role is not to freeze and impede development but to regulate, guide and inspire.

Unfortunately when it comes to visual quality development control task becomes impossible; the worst nightmare to townscape and architectural quality is ordinary and mediocre development control; which is likely by-default to accept the unsophisticated, obvious and expected (manipulation of heritage) and to fight and oppress the creative and distinguished. With such scenarios, it is safer to restrict development control to the manageable, i.e. the quantifiable and tangible; leaving the intangible including: invoking and revitalizing tradition to the development context, the involved community
and the involved actors. After all, societies only get the architecture and builtscape it earns and deserves.

REFERENCE NOTES


4. An earlier resort to the traditional and historic occurred in Egypt towards the end of the Nineteenth Century and continued till the Thirties in the present Century, see for example the documentary review by, R.Ilbert and M.Volait , Neo Arabic Renaissance in Egypt 1870 - 1930, Mimar ( Concept Media , Singapore, 1984) no. 13.p. 26 -34.


11. Ibid .p. 33.


14. For more on the need for creativity and intellectual abilities in dealing with the issues of tradition and architectural identity see, C.Abel, Tradition, Innovation and


16. For highlights of Fathy's style, recurrent themes and motives see, Chapters 5 and 6 of, J. Steele, Hassan Fathy, p. 63-120.

17. For a brief account on the Egyptian architect Weisa Wasef's career and important works see, S. Noweir, Weisa Wasef's Museum Harania, Mimar (Concept Media, Singapore, 1982) no. 5, p. 50-53.

18. ElNadaa (Dew) Neighbourhood, Sheikh Zayed New City, Egypt, Architects; Dr Ahmed Faheem and Dr Hisham Bahgat.

19. ElWorood (Roses) Neighbourhood, Sixth of October New City, Egypt, Architects; Dr Ahmed Faheem and Dr Hisham Bahgat.


- Project Credits:
The graphic material used in the figures are taken from the research reports presented at the Development Control and Applied Research postgraduate classes, Department of Architecture, Cairo University, 1997-1998; by the following Masters Degree Students:


- ElGouna Resort, Randa Reda, Ranya Fawzi, Reeman Reehan, Nermin AbdelGalil, Reem Mamdouh, Shahira Fahmy, Khalid ElAgroudi, Fatema Eid, Kareem AbdelRaheem.

Selected Masters and Doctoral dissertations; related to the theme, conceptions and notions of the present work; completed between 1990 and 1998; under the supervision of the authors; solely and with others:


