

had the opportunity to explore the relevancy of the knowledge they acquired in Britain, in their home land. Two of these British-educated architects, AbdelMonim Mustafa and Hamid ElKhawad, were able to distinguish themselves through their authentic design approaches. AbdelMonim Mustafa, is now considered the father of modern architecture in Sudan. Examples of significant buildings designed by Mustafa include the Headquarters for the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa, El-Ikhwa Commercial Building, El-Turabi Primary School and Nifidi and Malik Mixed-Use offices and apartment buildings in Khartoum's Central Business District.

Architecture from 2000 onwards

During this period, architectural practice in Sudan seems to have regressed. With the discovery of oil, and aspirations for images of Dubai, glass towers and aluminum cladding came to dominate the architecture style. By then, as Rowan Moore puts it "form started to follow budget". The Salam Centre for Cardiac Surgery in Khartoum, designed by Studio TamAssociati, a firm from Venice, represents the best of what has been built in Sudan after 2000. The project opened in 2010 and has won the 2013 Aga Khan Award for Architecture. The building manifests an outstanding marriage between the use of local materials and careful use of space. Mixed modes of ventilation and natural light enable all spaces to be homely and intimate.

Conclusion

As mentioned earlier, this article does not aim to trace all architecture development in Sudan. Rather, it intends to present a selective summary of the evolution of architecture in Sudan between 1900 and 2014. While early Sudanese architecture was clearly influenced by the modern movement, it also developed with an appreciation for regional factors that make it unique to Sudan. The degree of acceptance and influence that this development had on future architectural production in Sudan remains to be seen. The break that this trajectory constituted in the natural development of the architectural heritage of the country also needs to be studied, as well as analyzing the influence on future built culture. What appears to be undisputed is that the above factors, established by the colonial architects, and later exerting a strong influence on Sudanese architects, seem to have shaped the architectural scene up to the end of the 1970s. Additionally, due to Eurocentric approaches to education and a history of colonialism, some architectural academics in Sudan take little pride in local culture and how it impacts the built environment. Architectural production in the country is today characterized by imitation and a rootless character. Attempts at emulation of a regional approach are usually misguided or politically motivated. The economic aspirations resulting from oil wealth, have led to a trend of imitating the current architecture of the United Arab Emirates or Malaysia.

To popular imagination, Somalia is probably the last place one would expect to encounter Modernist architecture. However, for much of the twentieth century, the country – particularly its urban areas – were spatially, politically and culturally very different to the way in which they have been represented in the mass media in recent years. The country's oldest urban centers with a significant built form of architectural value are to be found along the coast. Some of these towns were important trading ports that had played a significant role in both the movement of goods to and from the Arabian Peninsula and India, and in the spread of Islamic cultural influences along the East African coast. Influenced by Arabs, Persian and Indian merchants, and, later, by European settlers, coastal towns – as urban enclaves with diverse inhabitants – have historically remained outside the nomadic traditional clan structure of the interior, to which most Somalis belong. Modernist influences on Somalia's pre-civil war architecture owe their morphology and characteristics to its former colonial power, Italy, the last of the European powers to join the "scramble for Africa". Some of the key structures built under colonial rule have in some ways influenced the form and style of the civic architecture that was subsequently built in the country's main cities. This is most evident in the capital, Mogadishu. The city's modern history began when the Italians arrived in 1889, taking control of the city and other coastal settlements, after having purchased the port of Benadir (Mogadishu region). After Rome took direct control of the administration in 1908, Mogadishu was officially made the capital of the new colony of Southern Somalia. The built form predating this period is of a compact walled city with two separate neighborhoods. Behind the heavy walls through which caravans brought goods from the country, was an Arab-style old center generally made up of terraced one-storey houses with battlemented cornices in the noblest examples, and thatched adobe homes. The transformation of the old city began under its first governor Giovanni De Martino, who immediately started to undertake projects that radically altered the character of the old city and which constituted an enduring influence on architectural and urban development in the country for most of the twentieth century. A plan of Mogadishu, produced in 1912 at 1:500 scale, can be considered the first town plan in Somalia, and one of the earliest in the continent. Under the plan, the walls of the old Arab style city were knocked down and two new native suburbs were to be constructed to the east and to the west. In contrast to other colonial planning models, for instance in Asmara and the Libyan medinas, where the colonial city developed next to the existing native city, in Mogadishu the buildings of the occupying power were constructed in its center, surrounded by Arab neighborhoods inhabited by Indians and Eritreans, outside which a modest native city gradually grew. In the center a new administrative area, connecting the two old neighborhoods and defined by a wide north-south avenue, was created. Within a short space of a time, the population increased dramatically, and the city became the subject of a new town plan. The footprint of the 1928 plan was based on the coastal outline connected by a series of roads that often adapted caravan routes heading further inland. The modifications which followed the 1912 plan, envisaged wide thoroughfares and the creation of a new European quarter. On the whole, the architecture of this period, implemented under the two plans, imitated colonial stereotypes and would come to define Mogadishu's cityscape. However, two exceptions, considered to be the earliest explicitly modernist examples in the country, were the Fiat Garage and the Croce del Sud Hotel (Southern Cross Hotel) built in 1933 by architect Carlo Enrico Rava. The characteristics of much of the architecture built in Somalia in the first half of the century broadly tended to be a mixture of colonial, Islamic, Norman gothic, indigenous vernacular and modernist aesthetic. However, it was the modernist examples that were to have an enduring influence on post-independence architecture, since this was largely seen as a way for the country to assert its identity using architectural forms. Significant public buildings that mirrored the stripped-down, modernist aesthetic of earlier examples such as the Croce del Sud Hotel, included the National Theatre and the National Assembly, both of which were completed between 1969 and 1974.

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