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KAIRO: DIE ENTWICKLUNG DES MODERNEN STADTZENTRUMS IM 19. UND FRÜHEN 20. JAHRHUNDERT. By IHAB MORGAN. pp. 334, 273 maps. Bern, Lang, 1999.
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A 1999 doctoral thesis submitted to the department of architecture at Zurich Technical University, *Kairo: Die Entwicklung des modernen Stadtzentrums im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert* is a welcome contribution to a steadily growing literature on the city of Cairo in all of its facets. Ihab Morgan, who was born and raised in Cairo, has written a study on the development of Cairo's newly emerging city centre in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. He reconstructs a process in the course of which Cairo transformed almost beyond recognition.

By the mid-twentieth century, visitors found a city that was big and European in style, having spread on both the east and west bank of the river Nile and being equipped with such features as tramways and apartment blocks, business quarters and department stores. Only one and half centuries earlier, Cairo had been confined to what nowadays is referred to as Cairo's old city by which is meant, on the one hand, Islamic Cairo around al-Azhar, and, on the other hand, Old Cairo with its strong Christian presence.

Opened by an introduction and closed by a conclusive summary and an extensive technical apparatus, the book is essentially divided into three parts, in accordance with Morgan's periodization of the history of Cairo in which he follows the political history of Egypt at large. He distinguishes between a pre-colonial, a colonial and a postcolonial period.

Morgan focuses on the interactive processes of change in the administration of the state and the city. According to his account, European ideas of urban planning entered Egypt with the French Occupation from 1798 to 1801. In order to facilitate their control over the city, the French divided it into eight quarters. They undertook a number of building measures, whereby they destroyed what they considered being in their way. At the same time, they founded counsel-like committees to have the local population take part in the decision-making. As to their practical sense as well as their technical

and organisational skills, French technocrats were welcomed to stay in Egypt and help building up something new, even after the French forces had been forced to leave the country. Muhammad Ali sent students to France and other parts of Europe in order to study subjects such as engineering and administration. He founded western-inspired schools for languages, military, medicine and engineering. Following the example of the French, who had surveyed Cairo in the framework of their encyclopaedic *Description de l'Égypte*, one of the first measures by Muhammad Ali was the foundation of a surveyor's office. All sorts of maps were made in order to help extend the agricultural land and have canals, dams and bridges built.

At the beginning of his book, Morgan compares the maps of Niebuhr (1774), Jomard (1821) and Coste (1837) and so illustrates the beginnings of Cairo's transition from a naturally restricted city to one going beyond such natural boundaries as the mountain of al-Muqattam and the Nile with its annual flooding. And he shows how Cairo became a city characterised by a dualism of old and new. It becomes clear how much Cairo depended on the regulation of the Nile. Plans to do something with and on the riverbanks could only be tempted when the river was somewhat restricted to a more or less permanent bed.

Morgan describes the development of Cairo as a cyclic process in which economic and urban expansions influenced one another and so caused demographic changes. He identifies five phases of urban and economic expansion.

From 1820 to 1840, Muhammad Ali monopolised the economy and sought to transform the administration and other institutions according to European models. These developments also became visible in Cairo itself. While Bulaq with its harbour became the centre of transshipment, Shubra was planned to be a kind of holiday resort. The citadel gained in political and institutional importance and the economic centres of the old city gradually dissolved and moved to the newly established area of Azbakiya.

From 1844 to 1882, the modernisation of Cairo continued under Muhammad Ali's successors. Numerous public projects were completed. These included the building of telegraph lines, railway tracks, irrigation and drainage systems as well as the introduction of a new health system. A kind of municipal office composed of city planners and architects as well as experts of medicine and hygiene was formed to create a comprehensive system of urban planning and surveying and to regulate the increasing building activities. For the first time, a so-called master plan was put on the agenda, a feature of urban planning to be resorted to again and again in the Egyptian modern history. In this period, not only the numbers of foreigners in the city increased. Also domestic migration to Cairo started.

This trend continued from 1882 to 1897, when the increasing presence of both foreigners and locals in Cairo resulted in further urban expansion and in a social divide along economic interests and ethnic affiliation.

From 1897 to 1907, when the building of the Aswan dam in 1902 provided for a permanent regulation of the Nile, a land reform had become necessary, places of trade had to be adjusted and intensified settlement on the Nile riverbanks in Cairo had become possible. As a result, investment of capital assets as well as land speculation grew dramatically, mostly to the benefit of foreign investors.

From 1907 to 1914, when colonial regression and economic crisis also showed in Egypt, a national movement appeared in all strata and groups of society and calls for a nationalisation movement. Nevertheless, as far as architecture and building industries are concerned, French and other European trends advocated by architects and planners trained and educated in Europe became more and more dominant.

As a result of these five periods of development, a new urban centre appeared to the west of the old city. Morgan outlines in detail how the urban topography of Cairo changed under the conditions of colonialism. From 1897 to 1907, an investment and building boom gripped Egypt. Any free space was transformed into building land. Not only the amount of money invested by Europeans was rising

but also the profits of European building companies operating in Egypt. The number of Europeans moving to Cairo grew further. Land in the newly emerging city centre became so valuable and the demand for multi-storey buildings increased to such a degree that newly built buildings were soon to be replaced by larger ones. This phenomenon implied the distinction between the land and the building, a feature that had been unknown in Egypt until the mid-nineteenth century, as the value of the land was traditionally perceived as belonging to the value of the house. Morgan explains that the life experience of a house in the quarters of the old city was traditionally considered unlimited. As a result, the old city of Cairo displays many different architectural styles from different historical periods. Unlike the old city, where the architecture had been a reflection of a life dominated by religion and religious institutions, Morgan argues that the architecture of the new city was determined by politics and the requirements of the state and its institutions.

Morgan delineates the development of the newly emerging city centre with regard to the structure of its streets, squares and buildings, and he analyses what these changes implied and meant in demographic and architectural terms and with regard to urban planning. He distinguishes between different kinds of zones, depending on their location and function. A liberal building policy allowed all kinds of architectural styles. Free market orientated policies of trade and land made speculators and building constructors destroy the existing private and semi-public microstructures and replace it with multifunctional space.

Although the division into pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial phases methodically eases the composition of Morgan's book, it is not meant to indicate turning points in the city's urban history. The urban development of Cairo appears to have been one of continuity rather than discontinuity. Once the centre of Cairo had shifted from the old to the new city during the nineteenth century, this move was consolidated around the turn of the century in that the planning of both the old and the new city was orientated towards the new centre. Once this consolidation was done, and due to increasing demographic pressures, a second phase of urbanisation focused on extending the new city by the building of suburban structures.

Morgan has written a highly informative and intelligible book, whose value is not diminished by its thesis-character, which is most apparent in the frequent repetitions. The book represents a combination of the methods, terminology and research output of the disciplines of history, sociology, geography and architecture. Morgan provides his readers with a large amount of background information, either integrated into the text or added in form of excursions in lengthy footnotes. Throughout the book, either in the text or in the appendix, Morgan provides the visual documents, illustrations, drawings, and photographs of street maps, construction plans or buildings, which he relies on in his analysis and argumentation.

Given the partly geographical character of the work, the lack of an index is highly unfortunate. Likewise irritating is the high number of printing errors and the awkward transliteration of Arabic terms and names, which is not only inconsistent but also fails to meet any scholarly standard. Such deficiencies could be removed in a more reasonably priced future edition, which would equally attract students of urban studies and anyone interested in the modern history of Egypt.

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