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**AinShams University
Faculty of Engineering
Architecture Department**

"A Critical Model For Paradigms and Influences of The Early 21st Century Architectural Practices"

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Philosophy in Architectural Engineering

By:

Mennatalla Tarek Mosaad Saleh Ali

B.Sc., Architecture, 2012

Faculty of Engineering, Ain Shams University

Master of Science in Architectural Engineering, 2016

Supervisor Committee:

Prof. Dr. Yasser Manssour

Professor of Architecture

Faculty of Engineering-Ain Shams University

Prof. Dr. Shaimaa Mohamed Kamel

Professor of Architecture

Faculty of Engineering-Ain Shams University

Prof. Dr. Khalid Mohamed Dewidar

Professor of Architecture

Faculty of Engineering-Ain Shams University

Ass. Prof. Ayman Ahmed Farid

Assistant Professor of Architecture

Faculty of Engineering-Ain Shams University

**Cairo, Egypt
2022**



Ain Shams University
Faculty of Engineering
Department of Architecture Engineering

Name: **Mennatallah Tarek Mosaad Saleh**

Title: **A Critical Model For Paradigms and Influences of The Early 21st Century
Architectural Practices**

Degree: **Doctor of Philosophy in Architecture**

The Jury Committee:

Professor Dr. Mohamed Khairy Amien

Professor of Architecture

Department of Architecture

Faculty of Engineering- Banha University

Professor Dr. Mostafa Refaat Ismaiel

Professor of Architecture

Department of Architecture

Faculty of Engineering - Ain Shams University

Professor Dr. Yasser Mohamed Mansour

Professor of Architecture

Faculty of Engineering - Ain Shams University

Professor Dr. Shaimaa Mohamed Kamel

Professor of Architecture

Faculty of Engineering - Ain Shams University

Post Graduate studies

Approval stamp

.../.../...

Faculty Council Approval:

.../.../...

The Research was approved on

.../.../...

University Council Approval:

.../.../...

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

"وَقُلْ رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا"

صدق الله العظيم

*To my Mom, the soul of my
Dad, husband, Sister, and life-
time friend Meenas
for all your support and
unconditional love*

I. Statement

This thesis is submitted as a partial fulfillment of Doctor of Philosophy degree in Architectural Engineering, faculty of Engineering, Ain shams University.

The author carried out the work included in this thesis, and no part of it has been submitted for a degree or qualification at any other scientific entity.

Name: Mennatallah Tarek Mosaad Saleh.

Signature:

Date:

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IV. Abstract

This thesis introduces a novel approach to investigate contemporary paradigms and different styles of architectural practices in the early 21st century, seen as isolated islands of practices. Multiple existing languages of architecture in the same cultural context is a new phenomenon causes a state of conflict and uncertainty in the architectural community and current criticism, These random debates opened the door for public panels of discussions and articles released with queries of the failure reasons of criticism to reach a mature philosophical state.

The research investigates the philosophy of paradigms of architectural practices as well as contemporary **iconic practices** of the age to recognize their embedded nature, different dimensions, how they are identified and interpreted to stand on a **theoretical-concrete base** that can criticize these different practices.

This approach aims at identifying a **meta-theory of interpretation** to criticize different architectural trajectories; exploring their ideologies, beliefs, values, design conceptions and final morphology with different styles. Besides, it extracts a **critical model** of contemporary architectural paradigms and influences with regard to the contemporary broader context.

Nevertheless, the research identifies a new pattern of architecture “***I-praxis***” and its characteristics announce a **paradigm-shift** from the previous industrial-architectural paradigm. This contributes to better understanding of the real drivers of contemporary practices, and their visible qualities through visual attributes beyond the obsolete visual and functional qualities.

KEYWORDS: Philosophy of paradigms, Architectural paradigms, Paradigm performance, Radical influences, Belief systems.

V. Summary

This research is a critical analysis to the different architectural practices exist in the early 21st century to investigate the true nature of each practice, their influences and drivers to explore the different architectural languages exist and identify the praxis behind contemporary patterns of practice leading to the diverse contemporary languages. It consists mainly of three parts;

The first part represents a critical analysis to the meaning of paradigms, interpretations to paradigm's progress and paradigm shift, possible interplay between the different paradigms in the same context. As well as, investigating the philosophy of architectural paradigms, their model of performance and their prime structures. Standing on the main influences of the architectural paradigms, identifying architecture of belief systems, exploring the invisible and visible dimensions of paradigms of architectural practices with few examples for validating these outcomes.

The second part of this study investigates deeply the true practices behind the most ten iconic projects globally in the early 21st century. The research stands on their real influences exploring their cultural context, history behind the practices, the dominant philosophy that motivated the architect to action and the main design approaches applied till reaching the iconic morphology with visual characteristics and expressive elements that characterize each of these cases in its context being influencing to other future practices as a distinguished language of architecture.

The third part of the study starts with a comparative analysis between the different practices extracted to construct four main families. Then these families were discussed critically identifying their common beliefs; either social or scientific or both, main philosophies, their resulted value-systems and design approaches as the invisible part constituting any architectural paradigm in order not to be biased to any theory or early interpretation. Furthermore, the visible dimensions of these families were explored and analyzed to feature relevant visual attributes that can best describe every family based on its nature of practices. Later, the belief system monitoring these practices was extracted identifying a hypothetical boundary of a common paradigm embracing these practices. Also, identifying this paradigm led the research to a phenomenon of paradigm-shift of contemporary architectural practices highlighting the new meanings and technologies being the radical influences of this shift. Finally, the research develops a theory of a new "**I-Praxis**" upon which it extracts a critical model of contemporary architectural paradigm and its main influences establishing a theoretical base for future interpretations and criticism to contemporary practices to grow and expand in a proper way that guarantee a true assessment of these practices and proper developments.

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