Abstract

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Architecture and the Expression of Globalization: The Case of Coffeehouses in Cairo

The empirical study presented in this article explores the impact of globalization on architecture. More specifically, through an investigation of coffeehouses in Cairo, the study examines how architecture and interior design are used to express globalization and the globalized lifestyle associated with it. The preliminary phase of the study confirms that residents in Cairo tend to be able to visually identify and distinguish from one another the three main types of coffeehouses that have been observed to currently co-exist in the city: 1) the traditional coffeehouse, 2) the colonial era coffeehouse, and 3) the globalization era coffeehouse. The main phase of the study investigates and identifies the main design characteristics that distinguish the globalization era coffeehouse from the other two types of coffeehouses. In its conclusion, the article discusses the physical characteristics of the globalization era coffeehouse, contrasting them with those of the two other types of coffeehouses. The conclusion also discusses the limitations of the study and implications for future research. It is hoped that this article can encourage more efforts toward the thorough scholarly characterization of what appears to emerge as a “globalization style” in architecture and interior design.