Gender Conference 2nd Global Conference on Gender Studies
01 – 03 November 2024 Copenhagen, Denmark

Architectural Discourse and Gender: Analyzing Egyptian Women's Representation in Architectural and Engineering Periodicals

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Abstract

Architectural magazines have played a role in enriching the sources of architectural history. Its significance lies in its being a historical document perceived as a narrative device that historians can rely on and an instrument in teaching the history of architecture. This paper attempts to assess the representation of women in Egyptian architectural periodicals and engineering magazines since architecture is a subset of engineering. We reviewed magazines published from the 1940s, covering the period from monarchy till President Mubarak's era, which had complex shifts toward women's status in society and architectural thought. We use discourse analysis to reveal the shifts in the perceived image of women in architecture. Initially, women were often perceived as housewives. Their primary role was within the realm of domestic management. We clarify this misconception about women. Furthermore, with societal and political changes occurring, there was a noticeable shift towards women perceiving them as active actors in building the nation with men. Interestingly, there were also periods where women seemed to be absent in architectural discourse, raising questions like where are Egyptian women architects? Overall, the research underscores the influence of political and societal changes in shaping the role of women in architecture in Egypt

Keywords: Architectural magazines; Architects; analysis; Egypt; Shifting perceptions; Women