

The Issue of Urban Character in the Suez Canal Region A Proposed Matrix for Developing the Area's Urban Character in Light of the Egyptian State's Development Plans

Waleed Hussein Ali Hussein, PhD

Fayoum University, Faculty of Engineering – Department of Architecture, PO box 102, Fayoum, Egypt

Abstract

Because of its environmental, social and humanitarian dimensions, the problem of urban character and absence of identity and authenticity is one of the issues of greatest concern in urban planning. There are thus several justifications for this research, including the importance of urban character for Suez Canal cities and the significance of place-identity and local character in Arab cities at large. This paper aims to observe and report on actual urban conditions in some of the districts in the Suez Canal governorates and to propose recommendations to support the process of development and urban conservation in an effort to ensure the continuity of the distinctive urban character of built-up areas of value. The methodology adopted in the first section of this paper to observe and assess existing urban conditions involves making use of earlier research and field studies dealing with the cities of Port Said, Ismailia and Suez where built-up areas developed in a natural, planned manner according to the needs and limitations of the cities. The Suez Canal Company traversed the Suez Canal water barrier and built the district of Port Fouad on the east bank of the Canal, thus dividing the city's built-up area into two districts or quarters: the eastern quarter (Al Sharq) and the western quarter (Al Gharb). (1) This paper also sheds light on the stages of growth and development of urban masses at different periods and examines the three growth axes in the cities concerned as well as the different types of land use. (2) The type of urban fabric, the characteristic attributes and the visual aspects of cities in the Suez Canal region are explored towards the end of the paper. Mixed residential land use is widespread while touristic, commercial and touristic / residential uses are concentrated mainly along the Mediterranean coast and (mixed with commercial land uses) eastward along the banks of the Suez Canal. Land use along the main streets of the cities is primarily residential / commercial – an attribute that has a visual and functional impact on city planning and that must therefore be taken into consideration by development plans and by all the parties involved in the planning process. (3)

Keywords: Suez Canal Region – Urban Character – Port Said – Suez – Ismailia – Al Arab Quarter – Western Quarter – Architectural Character

1. Introduction

The Suez Canal embodies history, politics, economics and civilization. It is a lifeline and an international channel that affects the interests and destinies of Egypt and the entire world. For an entire century, it was a principal subject matter for researchers and authors. The Nile River may be Egypt's lifeline, but the Suez Canal, the shortest waterway linking Europe to the East, is the country's life artery that has been called by many names; "key to the East", "door the East", "bridge to Asia".(4)

Ferdinand de Lesseps built the Suez Isthmus Canal, known today as the Suez Canal. However, early nineteenth century scientists were not the first to conceive of connecting the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea. From the earliest ages, and prior to the Canal's construction, many of Egypt's rulers (Pharaohs, Persians, Greek and Roman) had toyed with the idea of digging the canal and reaping the resultant riches.

Today, the Suez Canal region and the urban areas surrounding it constitute Egypt's international façade, an open museum displaying the country's rich history and its modern capabilities. As such, the region certainly merits being the subject of the kind of urban study presented in this research paper. (5)

1.2 Problem Statement

This research is justified by the importance of urban character for Suez Canal cities and the significance of place-identity and local character in Arab cities at large. It addresses the following problems:

- The loss of continuity and homogeneity of urban character in many residential districts and the loss of privacy and the absence of local identity and character in areas of urban expansion.
- Random demolition and reconstruction of valuable buildings in historic areas.
- Random encroachment on green spaces and vacant land.
- Inadequate awareness of the importance of areas of distinctive urban character and of the need to preserve them and benefit from them.

1.3 Research Objectives

This study aims to:

- Observe and report on the existing urban character of some districts in Suez Canal governorates in order to identify the more unique and distinctive urban areas in Suez Canal cities, whose distinctive urban appearance is compatible with the natural and social environment and possesses the necessary elements permitting urban continuity.
- Propose recommendations directed to the bodies and institutions responsible for urban development aimed at facilitating urban preservation as a first step towards ensuring the continuity of the remaining distinctive urban characteristics that constitute valuable national assets.

1.4 Methodology

The research adopts an analytical approach; it uses the analytical tools of observation, analysis and comparison, combined with site visits, to establish the current conditions in the areas of study.

2. The Suez Canal Region: A Definition

The Suez Canal region is the third of Egypt's seven regions. It includes the governorates of Port Said, Ismailia, Suez, North and South Sinai and has a surface area of approximately 7,380,588 km² (7.9% of the country's total area). In 2010, the region's inhabitants were around 9 million (9.7% of Egypt's total population). (23)
The Suez Canal region lies in the northeastern part of the country and is bordered to the north by the Mediterranean Sea, to the south by the Red Sea region and the Southern Upper Egypt region, and to the west by the Cairo and Delta regions. It connects the continents of Africa and Asia and is the eastern gateway to Egypt. (6)

3. Urban Areas Surrounding the Suez Canal Zone

The urban areas surrounding the Suez Canal zone include urban areas that are under the jurisdiction of each of the Governorates of Port Said, Ismailia and Suez. (7)

3.1 Urban Areas Surrounding the Suez Canal Zone and under the jurisdiction of Port Said Governorate

Until the first pickaxe hit the ground to start digging the Suez Canal on 25 April 1859, the Governorate of Port Said was nothing more than a small village with some saltpans and reeds growing on sandy hills that sloped down towards the Mediterranean, inhabited by a few fishermen living in straw hats and visited by migratory sea birds. The governorate was named after Khedive Mohamed Said, Egypt's ruler at the time. (8)



MAP (Northeast Part of Egypt without Saini), (36)

Port Said overlooks Lake Manzaleh, one of Egypt's largest, most important and most fertile natural inland lakes. It lies directly on the Mediterranean Sea to the north and is linked to the northern entrance of the Suez Canal to the south. All the natural conditions necessary for fish farming (a temperate climate all year round and natural feed etc) are available in the governorate, which accounts for approximately 48% of the country's natural lake production. (9)

The built-up areas in the Suez Canal zone area and located in Port Said Governorate fall into the following categories:

- Urban areas (Port Fouad – Al Sharq and Al Gharb quarters)
- Semi urban areas (Al Cap)
- Shanty towns / slums (Ezbat Al Ganayen)
- Rural areas (Al Tina)



MAP (Suez Gulf Region), (36)

3.1.1 Urban areas on the west Bank of the Suez Canal (Al Sharq and Al Arab districts):

Founded in 1880, Al Sharq quarter is one of the oldest neighborhoods in the city of Port Said. When it was first built, Al Sharq was inhabited by engineers working for Suez Canal Company. Since most of these were Europeans, the district came to be known as the 'European (*Afrang*) quarter'. Al Arab, founded in 1890, is the second oldest district of Port Said. Its first inhabitants were Arab laborers working on digging the Canal. The old timber buildings that housed the Egyptians working on the Canal are a distinctive architectural feature of this district as are the arcades that cover pedestrian walkways. Figure ... shows Al Sharq quarter and Figure ... shows Al Arab quarter. (10)



MAP (Architecture Pattern), (37)

3.2 The western architectural style prevalent in the quarter as seen in the buildings on Al Gomhoureya Street.

3.2.1 Urban areas on the west bank of the Suez Canal (Port Fouad): Located on the west bank of the Canal, this district was built in 1919 when the Suez Canal Company decided that it needed to construct warehouses and workshops as well as additional housing to accommodate the growing number of Company employees in Port Said. Bordered by the Mediterranean Sea and the naval arsenal to the north, the Port Fouad Channel to the east, and the Suez Canal to the west and south, it has a surface area of 695,505 km² and a population of 75247 inhabitants (2006 census). The historic villas that housed the foreign employees of the Suez Canal Company are a distinctive feature of Port Fouad, but the district also contains high-rises and rent-controlled housing constructed in the 1960s and 1970s, as follows:

3.2.1 High-rise neighborhood: These buildings were constructed recently, in the 1970s, to house Suez Canal Authority (SCA) employees of all categories (craftsmen, engineers, senior engineers etc). Average building height is 4 / 5 floors and the buildings are of identical design (simple horizontal projections and facade formations), although there are slight variations depending on resident category. These high-rise buildings cover a large part of district, dominating the city of Port Fouad.

3.2.2 Rent-controlled housing: These buildings accommodate a large number of Port Said's inhabitants. With an average height of 10 floors, they are of simple design with simple horizontal projections. All the buildings belonging to a given housing society are identical in design. (11)

(Architecture Pattern- Rent-controlled housing), (38)



Table 1. Urban areas on the west bank of the Suez Canal (Port Fouad district)

Urban design elements	Urban areas on the west bank of the Suez Canal (Port Fouad district):				
Urban area	Borders: Natural barriers limit expansion except to the south and east	Areas of urban homogeneity: SCA villas, older residential buildings and modern residential high-rises	Distinctive features: The Administration Building (former Mixed Tribunal Building) – Al Montaza Garden – The Islamic Compound – The Experimental Institute	Gathering Points: For recreational activities, feature water fountains and green spaces	Streets & walkway: Absence of pedestrian walkways – radial road layout for vehicles
Buildings overlooking the Suez Canal	Most of the buildings that overlook the Canal are used for services provided to ships passing through the Suez Canal (the Port Said Naval Arsenal, SCA Basin, ship transit zone, ship-servicing zone). With the exception of the ferryboat landing area, The buildings are not open to the public and, except for the section allocated to sports clubs that cater to a certain class of inhabitants; they are not used for recreational purposes. (12) 1. Port Said naval arsenal 2. SCA Basin 3. Sports clubs 4. Ferryboat landing 5. Ship transit zone 6. Ship servicing zone				
The building	The French-style residential villas that house SCA employees are the most distinctive and unique buildings in the district, although their architectural design is not appropriate for the climate. The Europeans built these villas for two reasons: to spread western culture and thinking among Egyptians and because they are located in an area where the temperate climate limits the impact of weather on both architectural and urban design. (13)				

Table 2. Urban areas on the west bank of the Suez Canal (Port Fouad district)

Urban design elements	Urban areas on the west bank of the Suez Canal (Al Sharq quarter):				
Urban area	Borders: Natural barriers limit expansion except to the south and west	Areas of urban homogeneity: Older residential buildings and newer residential high-rises	Distinctive features: Include buildings constructed by foreigners (SCA building and De Lesseps' statue) and those built by Egyptians (National Museum, Al Salam Mosque and the Sonesta Hotel)	Gathering Points: Used for recreational activities, feature water fountains and green spaces (Al Gomhoreya Square, Thutmose Square, Al Qawqa3a Square, Al Mansheya Square)	Streets & walkways: Pedestrian walkways are available – mesh layout of vehicle roads and road network continuity is assured by continuous urban greening
Buildings overlooking the Suez Canal	The buildings that overlook the Canal are used for public recreation and are open to the public, featuring pedestrian promenades, recreational activities and commercial outlets (De Lesseps Promenade, Tourist Promenade, Historical Garden, Helnan Hotel, Sonesta Hotel) as well as for providing services (Canal Shipping Agency, Al Rabat Company, International Telephone Exchange, Suez Canal Authority) (14) 1. Fishing port 2. De Lesseps Promenade 3. Residential and services buildings 4. Ferryboat landing 5. SCA 6. Old arsenal basin				
The building	The most distinctive are the old timber buildings with wooden verandas supported by wood pillars. The ease with which wood could be imported from southeast Asia by sea explains the prevalence of these buildings. They have, however, deteriorated with time and it is necessary to consider ways in which to restore and preserve this architectural heritage. (15)				

4. Elements of architectural design of buildings in urban areas west of the Suez Canal (Port Fouad):

- Regular, dynamic skyline that allows for the use of slanted gables
- Buildings are only separated from one another at the rear; they are connected at the sides

- Prevalence of two-storey villas (ground floor + first floor) in the Port Fouad district. The older timber buildings with their characteristic verandas supported by wood columns in the Al Sharq quarter are relatively taller, standing four stories high. The modest height of the buildings (villas and timber buildings) creates a warm, friendly atmosphere.
- Wooden terraces extending outwards about 60cm constitute building projections
- Centrally placed rectangular openings occupy about 40% of the area of building facades. Made of wood, they are regularly used on the facades of all buildings, creating a uniform and harmonious appearance. (25)

5. Urban areas surrounding the Suez Canal zone under the jurisdiction of Al Ismailia Governorate

The laying of the foundation stone of Timsah (Crocodile) City was celebrated on 27 April 1862 during Khedive Said's reign. In 1863, Khedive Ismail ascended to the throne and Ferdinand De Lesseps renamed the city Ismailia in his honor. It was officially inaugurated on 3 March 1863. (16)

5.1 Urban Characteristics of Ismailia

- Ismailia is located on the western shores of Lake Timsah, a lake with a 14 km² surface area that is slightly over one meter deep and forms part of the Suez Canal channel. Founded in 1869, the year the Suez Canal was inaugurated, Ismailia is one of Egypt's newest cities. Some neighborhoods and streets of the city (particularly in the villa district) are built in the French architectural style and still exist today. Ismailia was founded during the era of Khedive Ismail's project to modernize Egypt and it was therefore labeled "Little Paris". However, the high-rises constructed by the Suez Canal Authority after the nationalization of the Canal take up the greater portion of the city. These buildings have no distinctive character or identity. (17)
- The built-up areas are categorized into urban areas (Quarter no. 6), semi-urban areas (Qantara East and Qantara West) and rural areas (Al Balah, Al Fardan). This study will focus on the urban areas in Quarter no. 6. (18)
- Founded during the construction of the Canal, Quarter no. 6 is one of the oldest neighborhoods of the city. Located on the northern banks of Lake Timsah overlooking the Suez Canal, the quarter is bordered on the west by the Second Quarter. Divided into Al Abbasia, Mecca and Al Timsah neighborhoods, it contains a distinctive collection of SCA employee residences, interspersed with expansive green spaces. Owing to the characteristically low height of these buildings, Quarter no. 6 is sparsely populated. Georges-Eugene Haussmann, who re-designed Paris in the 19th century, designed the neighborhood and planned to make Ismailia a 'Little Paris'. His plans divided the city into two neighborhoods, a European one and an Arab one. Haussmann tried to differentiate between the two neighborhoods while at the same time ensuring that a natural harmony between them. Buildings overlooking the Ismailia Canal are characteristic of both neighborhoods. In the European Quarter, Haussmann added internal spaces of parks and public promenades from which extended a radial network of roads. The layout in the Arab Quarter is a right-angled mesh layout. (19)



The villas and radial layout in Al Nakheel Street – European Quarter (Quarter no. 6), (30)

Table 3. Elements of Building Façade Design in Urban Areas of Ismailia

Urban design elements	Urban areas on the west bank of the Suez Canal (Quarter no. 6):				
Urban Area	Borders: Natural barriers limit expansion except to the north	Areas of urban homogeneity Old residential villas built by the French and SCA high-rises	Distinctive features: Includes buildings constructed by foreigners (SCA Hospital) and those constructed by Egyptians (Suez Canal University, Al Zahra' Mosque and Al Shefa' Mosque	Gathering Points: Some are used for providing services (Al Zahra' Square, Quarter 5 Square), others for recreational purposes (Abdel Moneim Riad Square)	Streets & walkways: Absence of pedestrian walkways – mesh layout for some vehicle roads (University Street) and radial layout for others (Abdel Moneim Riad Street)
Buildings overlooking the Suez Canal	Closed building facades, not easily accessible and not open to the public. Moreover, security presence is high because of the need to guard the open facades of buildings overlooking Timsah Lake, and because the President's rest house is one of the buildings overlooking the Canal. (21) 1. Suez Canal Hospital 2. Church 3. Al Shefa' Mosque 4. President's Rest House 5. Green Spaces 6. Al Shati' Club and Hotel				
The building	The SCA high-rises are the most prominent. This is because the number of villas is small and the extensive vegetation conceals most of the villa facades. (22) High-rise entrances Outer fence surrounding high-rises Linkage between high-rises				

6. Urban areas surrounding the Suez Canal zone under the jurisdiction of Suez Governorate

The history of Suez Governorate goes back to the Pharaonic era when it used to be one of the fortresses of the 'Prince's Wall' that protected the Eastern Desert against foreign invasion. Suez was known in ancient times as Clisma, a name given it by the Greeks who used it as a commercial and military port. The Romans later changed the name to Closme, which was distorted to 'Al Qlosme' by the Muslim Arabs who conquered Egypt, a name that persisted up to the 10th century, when it was changed to Suez. (23)

6.1 Urban Characteristics of Suez Governorate

Suez City, the capital of the Governorate of Suez, is located on the Gulf of Suez at the southern entrance to the Canal. The largest Egyptian city on the Red Sea coast, it has five major neighborhoods:

- Port Tawfiq: An urban neighborhood where most government bodies and facilities are located
- Al Arba'een: A primarily popular neighborhood.
- Semi-urban built-up areas (Junaifa – Al Sheloufa)
- Rural areas (Al Ganayen neighborhood) (29)
- This study focuses on the urban built-up areas (Port Tawfiq).



Urban Characteristics of Suez Governorate (31)

Table 4. Elements of Building Façade Design in Urban Areas of Ismailia

Urban design elements	Urban areas on the west bank of the Suez Canal (Port Tawfiq):				
Urban Area	Borders: Natural barriers limit expansion except to the north	Areas of urban homogeneity SCA villas built by foreigners, older residential buildings and new high-rises	Distinctive features: Include buildings constructed by foreigners (the SCA building and the Naval School) and those constructed by Egyptians (Badr Mosque and the Port Tawfiq Chalets)	Gathering Points: Very few; there is only one square in the district (Investment Authority Square)	Streets & walkways: Pedestrian walkways along the Canal & a mesh layout for vehicle roads (Canal Street, Al Gaysh Street, Al Gawhar Al Qa'ed Street)
Buildings overlooking the Suez Canal	Characterized by widespread green spaces that conceal the facades of most buildings (buildings used for shipping services such as the SCA supply basin, SCA Works Management Building, SCA Movement Control Building, the Shipping Agency Company, SCA Training Center, residential buildings and religious buildings such as the Badr Mosque) (24) 1. Supply Basin 2. Badr Mosque 3. SCA Works Management 4. SCA Club 5. Shipping Company 6. SCA Movement Control 7. Residential buildings 8. SCA Training Center				
The building	The French style residential villas for SCA employees are the most distinctive and unique buildings in Port Tawfiq. Although their design is not suited to the climate, the foreigners built them for two reasons: to spread western culture and thinking among Egyptians and because they are located in an area where the temperate climate limits the impact of weather on both architectural and urban design. (25)				

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Conclusion

Urban character refers to a range of complex elements and attributes that are specific to a given place. These include both the tangible and intangible components of a given society and the changes that affect it over time, all of which contribute to forming the particular impression that we have of any place that we visit, an impression that recurs with every visit.

- Each urban area has its own distinctive urban character that is the result of variations in natural and human elements, location and differences between societies and their needs
- The Suez Canal cities were present on the map of Egypt in ancient times, but would not have continued to exist if the Suez Canal had not been completed in 1869, giving rise to the present urban morphology of the cities of Port Said, Suez and Ismailia. (34)

Port Said:

- The urban character of the district of Port Fouad is aesthetically and historically significant.
- The urban character of the *Afrang* quarter is aesthetically, historically and functionally significant.
- The areas of Port Said's recent urban expansion benefit from an uninterrupted continuity of the original city's urban fabric and structural components; the elements of urban character in these areas are carried over and continued (urban design, buildings). (36)

Suez:

- The urban character of Port Tawfiq is aesthetically and historically significant.
- The city center (the Arab quarter) has lost its urban character due to the replacement of many buildings destroyed in the 1967 war.
- Residential neighborhoods in Suez's modern urban expansion areas have the advantage of being standardized and homogeneous. (30)

Ismailia:

- The urban character of the *Afrang* and Arab quarters is aesthetically, historically and functionally significant.
- The need for rapid and easy construction to accommodate the growing number of citizens evacuated from the city during the war has given Ismailia's modern expansion area a distinctive urban character, characterized by neighborhood homogeneity. (4)

Urban design elements	Port Said Governorate		Ismailia Governorate	Suez Governorate
Urban Area	Port Fouad Borders: Strong natural barriers Areas of urban homogeneity: Mainly residential (SCA villas, older residential buildings and newer residential high rises) Distinctive features: The Administration Building (former Mixed Tribunal Building) – Al Montaza Garden –Islamic Compound – Experimental Institute Gathering Points: Recreational, featuring water fountains and green spaces Streets & walkways: Absence of pedestrian walkways – radial vehicle road layout	Al Sharq Borders: Strong natural barriers Areas of urban homogeneity: Mainly residential (older residential buildings and newer residential high rises) Distinctive features: Buildings constructed by foreigners (SCA building – De Lesseps’ statue) and those built by Egyptians (National Museum – Al Salam Mosque – Sonesta Hotel) Gathering Points: Recreational, featuring water fountains and green spaces (Al Gomhoreya Square – Thutmose Square – Al Qawqa3a Square – Al Mansheya Square) Streets & walkways: Pedestrian walkways available – mesh type vehicle road layout	Quarter no. 6 Borders: Strong natural barriers Areas of urban homogeneity: Old residential stand-alone villas built by the French & SCA high-rises Distinctive features: Buildings constructed by foreigners (SCA Hospital) and those built by Egyptians (Suez Canal University – Al Zahra’ Mosque – Al Shefa’ Mosque) Gathering Points: Some for providing services (Al Zahra’ Square – Quarter 5 Square), others for recreational activity (Abdel Moneim Riad Square) Streets & walkways: Absence of pedestrian walkways – Mix of mesh and radial vehicle road layouts	Port Tawfiq Borders: Strong natural barriers Areas of urban homogeneity: SCA villas built by foreigners, older residential buildings and new high-rises Distinctive features: Buildings constructed by foreigners (SCA building – Naval School) and those built by Egyptians (Badr Mosque – Port Tawfiq Chalets) Gathering Points: Very few; only one square (Investment Authority Square) Streets & walkways: Pedestrian walkways along the Canal – mesh type vehicle road layout
Buildings overlooking the Suez Canal	Primarily for shipping services, not open to the public (except for the ferryboat landing) and not used for recreational purposes (except for the section allocated to sports clubs)	Primarily used for public recreation and open to the public, featuring pedestrian promenades, recreation activities and commercial outlets. Some buildings used for shipping services	The facades of buildings overlooking the Canal are closed, difficult to access and not open to the public. High security presence	Characterized by widespread green spaces that conceal the facades of most buildings. Buildings are used for shipping services, as residential buildings and as places of worship
Building	The most distinctive buildings are the SCA French style residential villas.	The most distinctive are the old timber buildings with wooden verandas supported by wood columns.	SCA high rises are the most prevalent.	The French-style SCA residential villas are the most distinctive and unique.

7.2 Recommendations:

This study describes how the Suez Canal cities went through several stages of development during which their urban character changed, affected by the nature and impact of these developments. Recommendations for

completing the general configuration of these cities' urban character in participation with decision-making bodies, planners and service recipients are presented below:

7.2.1 at the Decision-Making Level

Governorate Local and Executive Councils

- Include promotion of historical areas in the city's development objectives
- Flexibility in amending or modifying policies and projects that are inconsistent with the historical character of an area
- Accord priority to the development and maintenance of public services (roads, public parks, public buildings), without damaging them, to complete the visual aspect of the city

Legislative Bodies

- Employ the services of specialists to establish appropriate urban standards and conditions concerning the conservation of local character

Suez Canal Authority Works Department

- Set up a team of specialists (planners – architects – artists – professional artisans) to direct and implement the renovation of villa neighborhoods.
- To the extent possible, ensure that residential housing projects for employees and pensioners share the same urban character while maintaining the flexibility to make adjustments or modifications, depending on visual variables
- Employ the services of specialized consultants to draft public services projects or to evaluate these prior to their implementation to ensure that they are in harmony with the city's urban character
- Speedy approval of strategic plans for cities and the application of urban controls to limit random urban expansion and to prevent the distortion of the city's general character

Committee for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage

- Consider dividing cities into harmonized urban sectors to help identify the areas for conservation
- Establish separate construction conditions for each area according to its specific characteristics and present these to legislators for inclusion in the building codes
- Provide training on correct techniques for the restoration of valuable buildings to cadres of artisans
- Organize public symposiums to raise awareness of the city's cultural heritage and its importance.

7.2.2 at the Level of Planners and Specialists

- Study the city's identity (history, culture) and identify an area's urban character prior to embarking upon the design process
- End to the trend of transporting and mimicking western urban projects that are completely unrelated to local conditions
- Review and assess projects already implemented in areas of distinctive character and disseminate the results to make the most of positive aspects and avoid repetition of errors or shortcomings
- Avoid encroaching on the visual configuration of urban areas so as not to interfere with their cultural value.

7.2.3 at the Recipient Level

- Adopt an optimistic stance towards urban development projects
- Value local character and style and avoid random imitation of western urban designs and styles
- Respect the area's general identity and character when undertaking urban development and replacement projects; shops and stores must respect the urban character of their surroundings and refrain from encroaching on front spaces and building facades.

References

1. Abdel Moneim Mohamed Hanafi. (2005.), *Al moqawemat goghrafeya letanmeya madeena bur said* (Geographical Components in the Development of Port Said City). Governorate of Port Said. First Edition.
2. Ali Raafat. *Al Ebda3 al fanni fi al 3emara* (Artistic Creativity in Architecture).(1997), Part 2. Al Ahram Commercial Presses. January.
3. *Al suez 2009* (Suez 2009). A book issued by the Suez Governorate (Regional Authority for the Promotion of Tourism in Suez).
4. Abdel Hamid Ahmed. (1993), *Eteghat al 3emara ba3d al 7adatha wa athareha 3al al3emara fi misr* (Post Modern Architectural Trends and their Impact on Architecture in Egypt). Third International Scientific Conference – Faculty of Engineering – Al Azhar University..
5. *Bur said gawharat misr* (Port Said: An Egyptian Jewel). (2003), A book issued by the Public Relations Department and the Information and Decision Support Center of the Governorate of Port Said on the occasion of the Governorate's national holiday..
6. Fayrooz Mohamed Hassan. (2010), *Al modom al masreya* (Egyptian Cities). Part 2 – Section 1. Supreme Council of Culture.

7. Fouad Farag.(2012), *Tareekh al modon alqadeema wa daleel almodon al7adeetha* (History of Ancient Cities and Guide to New Cities).
8. Fouad Farag. (2012),*Manteqa qanal al suez wa modon al qanal bur said – al suez – al ismailia wa sewaha* (The Suez Canal Region and the Canal Cities: Port Said – Suez – Ismailia and others). Volume 2.
9. Gameel Abdel Qader. (2010), *Azmat al haweya al 3omraneya laday al muslimeen* (The Urban Identity Crisis among Muslims). *Al Muhandess Al Urdoni* (The Jordanian Engineer) periodical. Issue 51.
10. General Authority for Urban Planning. *Mashroo3 e3dad al mokhatat al estrateji le mo7afaza bur said almadeena al wa7eda* (Project for Preparing the Strategy Plan for Port Said Governorate – Port Said City). Arab Consulting Engineers Moharram-Bakhoum..
11. General Authority for Urban Planning.(2009), *Mashroo3 e3dad al mokhatat al estrateji le madeena al Ismailia, mo7afaza al Ismailia* (Project for Preparing the Strategy Plan for Ismailia City, Ismailia Governorate), Phase I.
12. General Authority for Urban Planning. (2009), *Mashroo3 e3dad al mokhatat al estrateji le madeena al suez, mo7afaza al suez* (Project for Preparing the Strategy Plan for Suez City, Suez Governorate), Phase I.
13. Hossam Mohamed Al Samadi. (2008), *Ta'theer al seyosat wa al tawagohat al 'eqtesadeys 3ala al tabe3 al me3mari* (The Impact of Policies and Economic Trends on Urban Character). Masters Thesis. Faculty of Engineering – Suez Canal University.
14. Khaled Salah Abdel Megid. (2007), *Dor al alwan fi al bee'at al sakaneya* (The Function of Color in Residential Environments). A research paper presented at the 3rd Housing Symposium (A Residential Quarter is More than Just Housing). Higher Authority for the Development of Riyadh City. May
15. Ministry of Housing, (2009),*Utilities and Urban Communities – General Authority for Urban Planning. Estratejeya al tanmeya le mo7afazat eqleem qanat al suez 3am 2008* (Development Strategy for Suez Canal Region Governorates in 2008).
16. Mustapha Mohamed (2007),*Al Boghdadi. Madinat bur said, al modon almasreya* (Port Said City, Egyptian Cities). Part 2. Supreme Council of Culture.
17. Noha Mohamed Taher Mohamed Abu Samra. (2007), *Malame7 al tashkeel al3omrani le netaqat al mosta7at al ma'eya* (Morphological Characteristics of Urban Water Bodies). Master's Thesis. Faculty of Engineering – Suez Canal University.
18. Sayed Al Toni & Dr. Nesmat Abdel Qader. (1997), *Eshkaleyat al nasg wa altabe3* (The Problem of Urban Fabric and Character).
19. The Egyptian Cabinet – Information and Decision Support Center. (2006), *Daleel al taqseem al edari lelmo7afazat 7at mostawa al sheyakha wa al qarya* (Guide to the Administrative Divisions of Governorates).
20. The Manuscripts Center, Bibliotheca Alexandrina. *Inauguration of the Suez Canal*.
21. The Manuscripts Center, Bibliotheca Alexandrina. *A Voyage down the Canal*.
22. Radi Mohamed Gouda. (2006.), *Al suez madina altareekh* (Suez, A City of History). Suez Governorate.
23. Planning Strategies for Governorates of the Republic.(2006.), *Suez Canal Region*.
24. Powell, Kenneth.(2010), *City Transformed, Urban Architecture at the Beginning of the 21st Century*. Laurence King. New York.
25. Yousri Debess. (2014), *Al Ismailia 3abqareya al makan wa al insan* (Ismailia: The Genius of Place and Man). Egyptian Forum for Creativity and Development.
26. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/sidi-Bou-Said>
27. <http://suezcanal.bibalex.org/Presentation/Gallery/GalleryHome.aspx>
28. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suez>
29. http://www.associationlesseps.org/en/suez_historique.html
30. <http://www.sis.gov.eg/ar/lastpage.aspx?category-ID=22>
31. <http://www.maps.yahoo.com>
32. <http://www.portsaid.gov.eg>
33. <http://www.suez.gov.eg>
34. <http://www.ismailia.gov.eg>
35. <http://www.faroukmisr.net/isma3elbasha.htm>
36. http://www.architectura.net/bldgs//index_en.htm
37. <http://www.scuarts.com/SuezCanal.htm>