

Loss of Identity in the Urban Character: Examining the Sameness in Urban Skyline Due to Mass-Produced Architecture in Abu Dhabi



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Abstract: *This article embarks on a comprehensive exploration of globalization and mass-produced buildings; specifically focusing on Abu Dhabi's urban character, highlighting concerns about regaining unique identity and localization. Employing historical research and case study analysis, it explores factors contributing to urban sameness, including standardized construction practices, limited building material diversity, and cross-cultural influences. Focusing on projects like Abu Dhabi Central Market and Louvre Abu Dhabi, the research unveils a complex interplay of forces shaping the city's identity. Acknowledging the study's limitations, it emphasizes the necessity of a broader global architectural discourse. The findings advocate for future urban planning practices that prioritize sustainability, uniqueness, and a break from the cycle of sameness in Abu Dhabi's urban identity.*

Keywords: *Sameness, urban identity, modern architecture, urban skyline, globalization*

Kentsel Karakterde Kimlik Kaybı: Abu Dabi'de Seri Üretim Mimarisi Nedeniyle Kentsel Silüetteki Aynılığın İncelenmesi

Özet: *Bu makale, küreselleşme ve seri üretilen binalar ile ilgili kapsamlı bir incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmada Abu Dabi'nin kentsel karakterine odaklanarak, özgün kimliğin ve yerel karakterin yeniden kazanılmasına dikkat çekmektedir. Tarihsel araştırma ve vaka incelemeleri yapılarak, standartlaştırılmış inşaat uygulamaları, sınırlı yapı malzemesi çeşitliliği ve kültürler arası etkiler gibi kentlerdeki benzerlik faktörlerini ortaya çıkarmaktadır. Abu Dabi Merkez Pazarı ve Louvre Abu Dabi gibi projelere odaklanan araştırma, kentin kimliğini şekillendiren karmaşık etkileşimleri açığa çıkarmaktadır. Çalışmanın sınırlılıklarını kabul edilirken, daha geniş bir küresel mimari tartışmanın gerekliliği vurgulanmaktadır. Elde edilen bulgular, Abu Dabi'nin kent kimliğindeki benzerlik ve aynılığa döngüsünden uzaklaşarak, sürdürülebilirlik ve özgünlük temelli mimari ve planlama uygulamalarını savunmaktadır.*

Anahtar kelimeler: *Aynılığa, kent kimliği, modern mimari, kent silüeti, küreselleşme*

1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization initiated a repetition of the characteristic similarities among the identity of the urban patterns in most of the different megacities in the world. The proliferation of mass-produced housing in Abu Dhabi raises concerns about the diminishing uniqueness of its urban character. The pervasiveness of matching architectural compositions and configurations has led to this investigation of the causes behind this homogeneity. This study contributes practical understanding of the discourse on urban identity loss due to mass-produced housing in Abu Dhabi. This study aims to track the complicated connotations between mass-produced housing and how it influences the loss of urban identity in the urban character of Abu Dhabi. By illustrating the dominant resemblance in the architectural language of the various dwelling projects in Abu Dhabi, the study aims to determine the factors contributing to the sameness in the urban's distinctive character.

Adopting a dual methodology of historical research and a case study analysis, this research documents the evolution of the urban character of Abu Dhabi. The historical research facilitates the pivotal moments that shaped Abu Dhabi's identity, while the case study focuses on specific project examples such as Abu Dhabi Central Market, Louvre Abu Dhabi and Bulgari Pavilion. The research provides a contemporary lens to detect the patterns contributing the sameness. Mass-produced housing mechanism instructs immediate construction, it generates standardization and repetition in planning and character. Therefore, dwellings work as a product, and they become identical. The research includes techniques of standardized construction practices, influence of specific architects or firms, limited diversity in available building materials and cross-cultural exchange shaping architectural preference, height and scale, and matching exterior facades are some of the findings from the case study that cause sameness in urban character of Abu Dhabi. Potential limitations of the research may include the scope of the study, this topic in general is part of a global architectural conversation and it should be done in every metropolitan area to bring new materials to the big picture. The texture of each metropolitan area is unique and their associations are complex to discuss without diving deeper into terms such as historical, geographical, and ecological background. Abu Dhabi has a multidisciplinary urban texture with an extraordinary founding narrative, which is affected by globalisation therefore it was reasonable for the research. The study elaborated a multifaceted understanding of the convoluted dynamics between mass-produced housing, globalization, and the urban character in Abu Dhabi. By alleviating care and importance on the challenges posed by sameness in Abu Dhabi's urban fabric; the research desires to broadcast the findings of the breakdown for forthcoming architectural and urban planning practices moreover promoting sustainable and unique urban development to break the cycle of sameness in urban identity in future.

2. THE EVOLUTION OF URBAN CHARACTER DUE TO MASS-PRODUCED ARCHITECTURE

The revival and the rapid spread of the globalization concept brought most of the metropolitan city into sameness. Globalization is an outcome of the growing interdependence of the world's economic, cultural exchange and demographic changes, and advancements in both communication and transportation. With the technological developments, the construction sector has revised. Standardized, no-risk-taking developments are involved in order to build faster. In numerous metropolitans, notably in the developed world, investors have not diversified their portfolios and consequently enclose familiar street assets and skyscrapers. Capital skyscraper market flows also have been influenced by global architectural language. In essence, due to the need for housing, metropolitan areas became a concrete jungle. From the street to the roof, the rooms pile up one on top of the other, while the tent of a horizonless sky encloses the entire city. But the height of city buildings is a purely exterior one. Home has become mere horizontality [1]. In the quest for a globally recognizable urban essence, the unique features that traditionally allocated cities surrender to an unbearable uniformity.

2.1. The Dominance of Mass-Produced Buildings in the Urban Character of the Cities During Modernism

Modernism corrupted the continuity between urban spaces and architecture. Therefore, urban design appeared to manage deficiencies in modern planning, leading to the development of future approaches in city design [72]. Metropolitan areas define vast urban regions characterized by high population density, financial dynamism, and complicated social facilities. The evolution of megastructures came as an effect of several social and technological developments. The term first came into use during the 1880s, after the first construction of skyscrapers in Chicago. It originally represented buildings with ten or more stories although by the late 20th century, it started to define buildings higher than thirty or forty stories as skyscrapers. The following century witnessed a rapid growth of the race to the sky, with designers pushing the limits of engineering and design. The increase of migration from rural to urban slowly became an outcome for commercial centres and resulted in a more increased necessity for living space. A house is a machine for living in [3]. The 20th century led to an era of groundbreaking initiatives manifested by the Chrysler Building and the Empire State Building in New York City. (Figure 1) The Empire State is a building with no other program than to make a financial abstraction concrete -that is, to exist. All the episodes of its construction are governed by the unquestionable laws of automatism [4] (Figure 2).

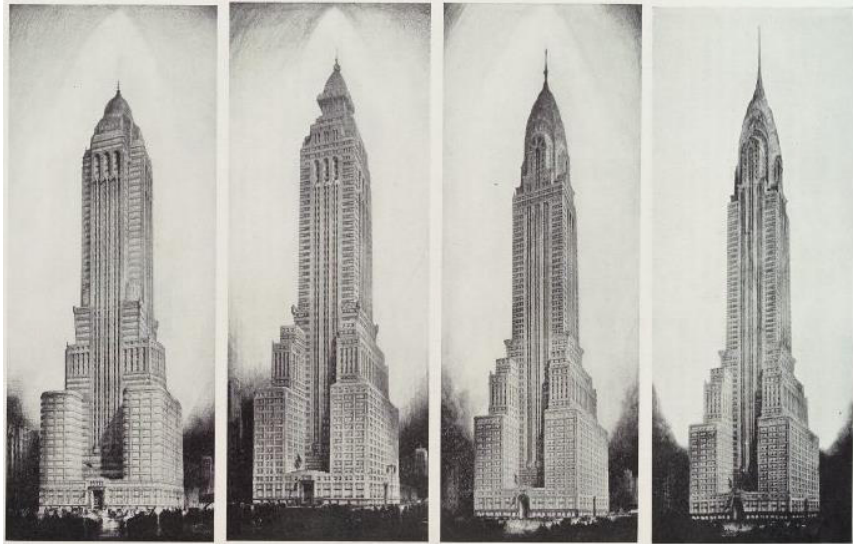


Figure 1. Stages in the design for the Chrysler Building, New York [5]



Figure 2. Empire State Building, New York [6]

The predominance of corporate architectural samples and standardized design practices engenders an architectural homogenization transcending geographic confines, deteriorating the cultural nuances and historical richness integral to urban character. As urban topographies merge into a seemingly undifferentiated panorama, the simultaneous loss of identity becomes detectable. Given that urban artifacts and places as spatial types are complex constellations of use, form and meaning, the interconnective webs that comprise urban typologies of buildings and spaces must somehow be disassembled before travelling, remembering that the buildings and landscapes themselves are not circulating [2].

The community's relation to space is multifaceted. It activates practices of care and exchange, processes of production and social reproduction as well as the construction of shared world views [7]. Post-World War II, the sensation circulated globally, with cities like Chicago, Hong Kong, and Tokyo joining the skyline race. The Seagram Building in New York (1958) (Figure 3). and the John Hancock Center in Chicago (1969) (Figure 4), displayed the lines and structural invention characterizing the International Style. Architectural pioneers made progress in construction materials and methods to push the limits of design. Glass and steel structures have been used more globally. In 1947, glass was selected to prevent indoor spaces from heating issues, necessitating air conditioning. By 2010, advanced glass in Burj Khalifa filtered heat, rendering air conditioning a luxury [60].



Figure 3. The Seagram Building in New York [8]



Figure 4. John Hancock Center in Chicago [9]

In Tokyo, the post-war period witnessed a vibrant modification of its urban material (Figure 5). The Kasumigaseki Building, completed in 1968, was a pioneering structure that Japan's entry into the era of high-rise construction. (Figure 6) It set the stage for Tokyo's future as a metropolis pictured by towering

structures that coordinated functionality with avant-garde design. Shifting to Europe, London's Centre Point, completed in 1966, symbolised a considerable release from conventional architectural norms. It played a basic role in redefining London's skyline and influencing ensuing results in the city's architectural topography. (Figure 7).



Figure 5. Mount Fuji and Tokyo Skyline [10]

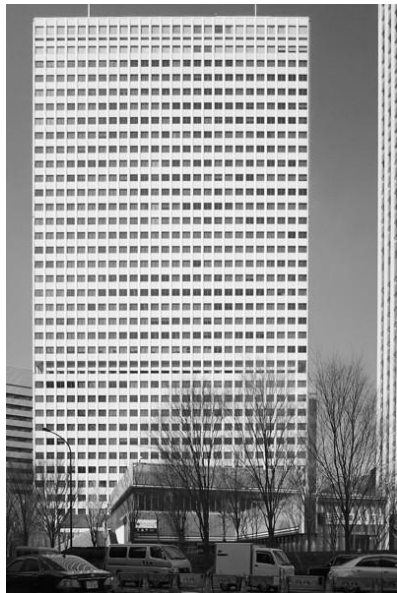


Figure 6. Kasumigaseki Building [11]



Figure 7. London's Centre Point [12]

In Australia, Sydney's Australia Square Tower, completed in 1967, became a symbol of modernity and progress (Figure 8) (Figure 9). The megastructures are wholly internalized environments, with their own life-support systems [13].



Figure 8. The Square Tower, Australia [14]

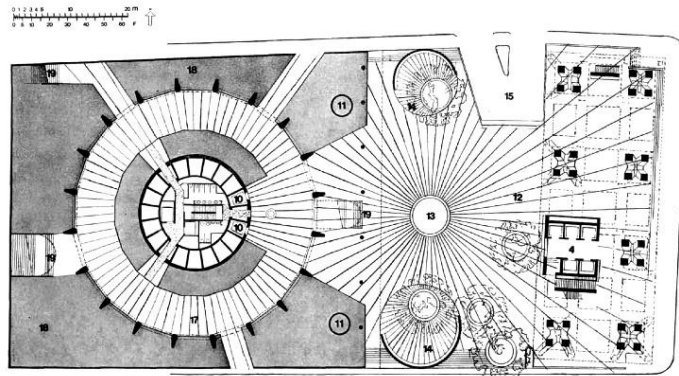


Figure 9. Plan of the Square Tower [15]

The dominance of these machines in urban landscapes was used as an answer to maintain the needs of basic functions for users however it built about a modernist architectural era slowly after the corruption of the historical and cultural identity of a city, replacing traditional architecture with a more standardized, globalized aesthetic. Destruction has always been associated with architecture, both with reconstruction and with new construction, and almost dramatically with ruin, which always emerged as a sublime entity due to its loss of stability [16]. The city grows as the original nucleus, enclosed within the walls, extends itself according to its own specific nature: and to this formal individuation corresponds a political individuation [17]. The most successful node seemed both to be unique in some way and at the same time to intensify some surrounding characteristics [18]. Planning will not go away; no, it will never again be depoliticized, as some once hoped [19].

Sameness in architecture is often born from a conjunction of design elements, building materials, and global sensations that surpass geographical boundaries. One of the major factors contributing to architectural homogeneity is the consequence of architectural styles. The globalization of design trends, such as the prevalence of modernism in the mid-20th century, has led to the replication of similar structures worldwide. Each moment can be seen to have a different capacity for geographical mobility and transitions inevitably entail some kind of spatial movement [20]. Hence architectural trends are also moving across the continents. For instance, the Seagram Building in New York City (Figure 10) and the TD Centre in Toronto (Figure 11), promote a sense of sameness across completely different urban terrains. Physical and historic conservation is threatened by private and public development, expanding institutions, office buildings, commercial complexes, and transport systems [21].



Figure 10. Seagram Building New York [22]

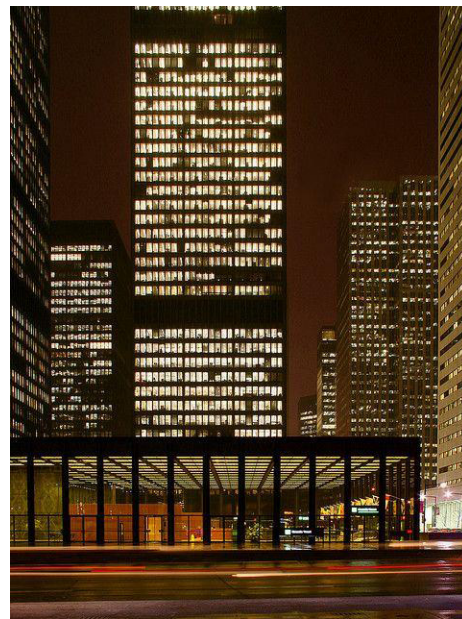


Figure 11. TD Centre, Toronto [23]

Another aspect is the standardization of building materials. Leaving parts of the building uncooked; and using materials and forms that are inexpensive to change around [24] causes repetition of identity. With the construction initiatives, the use of universally available materials such as glass, steel, and concrete has become across the board. This standardization not only encourages cost-effective construction but also donates to visual uniformity, as seen in the proliferation of glass-clad skyscrapers in major cities like Dubai and Shanghai. The change in suburban areas indicates accomplishment of urbanization and future vision and is a mirror to the light and the shadow of China's modernization [25]. Therefore standardization drags the construction process into an endless repetition. We must shift from a way of life that valorizes consumption, in which we take our identities from the branded characteristics of the goods we purchase to one that enables us to develop our talents and our individuality, to realize our truest selves through our work and other activities [26]. The global interconnectedness of economies,

cultures, and information has stimulated the immediate diffusion of architectural trends (Figure 12) (Figure 13).



Figure 12. Shanghai's Urban Character [27]



Figure 13. Dubai's Urban Character [28]

Architects, designers, and developers are exposed to a shared pool of similar ideas, leading to the repetition of structures from different parts of the world. Competition among local governments to attract new investment and development operates the same way an economic market does [29]. The design of shopping malls often follows a standardized approach, with atriums, even storefronts, and matching interior layouts. Mall designs, such as the Mall of America in the United States, influence the architectural terminology of commercial spaces worldwide (Figure 14). The rebuilding of public spaces since the 1980s shows signs of the same homogenizing forces of redevelopment [30]. On the other hand, dominant architectural movements are another feature that causes sameness. Modernist, postmodernist, and contemporary architectural styles, for example, have influenced the aesthetics of urban landscapes.



Figure 14. Mall of America, Bloomington [31]

The emergence of luxury residential condominiums with shared features such as floor-to-ceiling windows, contemporary designed interiors, and co-living spaces is a multidisciplinary phenomenon. Developments like the Marina Bay Sands Residences in Singapore and the Shard Residences in London can be examples of a shared architectural vocabulary in high-end residential projects (Figure 15) (Figure 16). Moreover, mass production and efficiency also play a higher role in urban planning. With the rapid growth of standardized construction methods, similar designs and materials are involved in the construction process. Some modern airport terminals exhibit similarities in design, featuring expansive glass walls, open spaces, and streamlined layouts. Terminal 5 at Heathrow Airport in London and the Incheon International Airport in Seoul, have an identical interior concept for airport design. (Figure 17) (Figure 18).



Figure 15. Singapore [32]



Figure 16. London [33]



Figure 17. Heathrow Airport, London [34] Figure 18. Incheon International Airport, Seoul [35]

2.2. The Influence of Urban Landscape On the Urban Character

Urban landscape refers to the spatial arrangement of various borders within an urban area. It is about thinking in the bird's view and corresponding to the complicated relationships that most of the urban areas. It contains the layout of streets, buildings, open spaces, and additional physical qualities that collectively shape the overall structure of a metropolis. The urban design include aspects such as the grid layout of roadways, the distribution of land uses, and the overall design of the urban environment. Urban landscape is the collective composition of the physical characteristics and features of the land within an urban area. It includes the natural and artificial elevation, gradients, water bodies, geographical elements, social life and movements that contribute to the terrain the city. Urban landscapes can be classified as an inseparable combination of the natural and cultural specifications of a region [61].

The sequence of the patterns for a design, as generated by the language, is therefore key to that design [36]. The urban landscape is a dynamic unit in the urban character in which people experience the city. It is where the story happens. Urban users witness anything and everything related to the routine right there on the sequence. They extend from one line to another, including the building borders, edges, land uses, and setbacks that define each side. They offer space for movement and facilitate a variety of stories routines and uses. Sequences could conduct the daily routine of the users. It could shape their daily life. A good physical framework for life between buildings and for communal activities is, in all circumstances, a valuable, independent quality, and – perhaps – a beginning [37]. From buying coffee or using public transportation to reach school or work; streets are the connectors of the storyline of the users. The streets are like pipes into which men are sucked up [38] (Figure 19). The feeling of

identification which makes people a part of the world, arises from five areas: the building, the street, the neighbourhood, the city, and the region [39].



Figure 19. Dubai Streets as the example for pipes [40].

Designing a structure on a micro-scale leaves a mark on the macro scale and builds a story with the social life of the urban. The legibility of places and spatial perception are affected by the characteristics of urban morphology. Individuals' orientation and the clarity with which they experience those spaces are specified by the nature of urban morphology. The forms and arrangements of physical components that constitute urban character shape and change spatial perception [73]. One of the essential qualities of a town is that it is a gathering together of people and utilities for the generation of civic warmth [43]. The design should harmonise with the natural surroundings, creating a seamless integration between the built and unbuilt spaces. Localization is part of the architecture that portrays an approach that surpasses the conventional paradigms of design, containing a comprehensive concentration on the cultural, environmental, and social contexts ingrained in a specific zone. At its core, a perspective lies which conveys, acknowledges the play between the atmospheres, the built surroundings and the distinctive elements of a place. Modern building is now so universally conditioned by optimized technology that the possibility of creating significant urban forms has become extremely limited [44]. This global repetition approach enables a sense of continuity, where the architecture becomes an extension of the land it occupies. Likewise, as some architects or urban planners do not copy-paste the plan they draw to every zone; localization could break the cycle of repetition in urban metropolises. Consider the case of Battersea Power Station in London, a superior sample of the mark of modernization on urban character and authority (Figure 20). Once an iconic symbol of the Industrial Revolution, the power station faced a transformation into a luxury outcome project.



Figure 20. Battersea Power Station, London [45]

Environmental considerations are essential in the urban design procedure. Analyzing the local climate, adopting tolerant design methodologies to harmonize with natural elements. This extends to the utilization of region-specific materials and construction techniques, ensuring that the ecological footprint is minimized, and the project contributes to the sustainability of the surrounding environment. On the other hand, this is what is not happening in the global architectural language. The language that has been built has a lack of connection between nature and the structure itself. The things themselves, the people, the air, noises, sound, colour, material presences, textures, forms –basically every feature moves the users, and builds a connection between users and the space itself [42].

The modernization process involved repurposing the site into a high-end residential and commercial space, necessitating the removal of original architectural elements. As the iconic chimneys were reconstructed, the site's industrial heritage gave way to a standardized, upscale format. This metamorphosis not only resulted in the loss of a unique urban character that once defined London but also signalled a shift in authority. The European avant-garde fell in love with American factory buildings [46]. Architect as we know him at present, the purveyor of primarily structural solutions, is only one of a number of competing environmentalists, and what he has to offer no longer carries the authority of either necessity or unique cultural approval [47] (Figure 21).

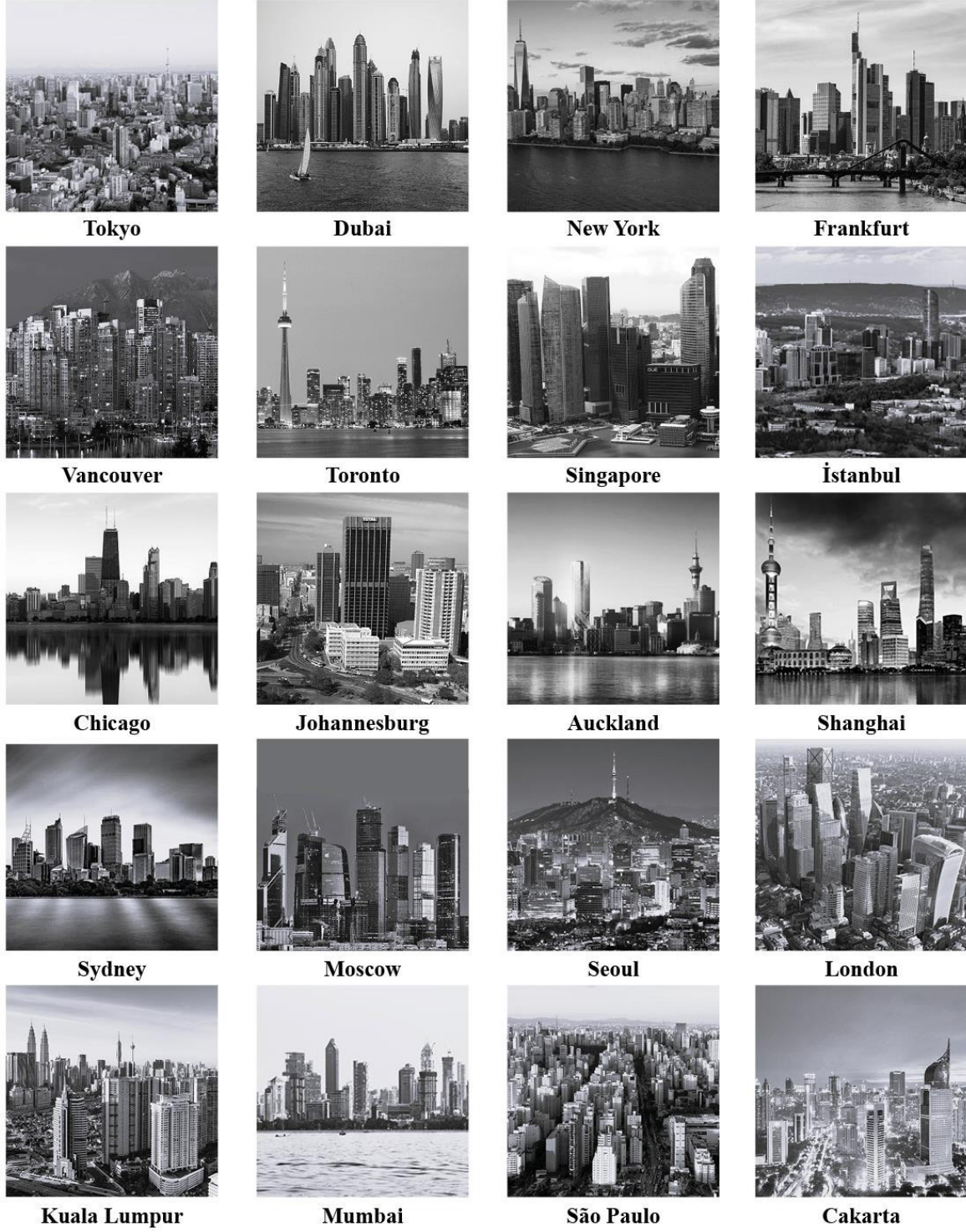


Figure 21. Urban Skylines [48]

3. URBAN CHARACTER OF ABU DHABI

Abu Dhabi, despite its undeniable allure and modernity, grapples with a distinctive sense of sameness in its urban character. This phenomenon is palpable in the city's urban landscape, where towering structures and opulent developments often adhere to a homogeneous design resemblance. The skyline, designed with glass facades and contemporary structures, reflects a prevailing uniformity that can be

perceived as both a testament to rapid development and a potential challenge to diversity. The reasearch is aimed to dive deeper into history. Then focuses on the specific examples from Abu Dhabi.

3.1. Historical Evolution: Abu Dhabi's Journey Through Time

Abu Dhabi stands as a testament to the synthesis of iconic architectural elements, expansive commercial domains, green golf expanses, perfect sandy shorelines, opulent lodgings, and a harmonious blend of diverse races and cultures, collectively encapsulating the embodiment of a 21st-century city. However, an intellectual investigation into the city's historical narrative reveals a markedly disparate Abu Dhabi, a compelling saga etched in the annals of its rich history. Archaeological findings substantiate the existence of a prolonged human habitation spanning over 100,000 years in this geographic expanse. A climactic juncture in the historical continuum occurred in 1761, when the Bani Yas tribe, rooted in the Liwa oasis, unearthed potable water on a remote island, now recognized as Abu Dhabi. Immersing in time-honoured practices such as fishing and pearl diving to their counterparts in Dubai, the Bani Yas tribe initiated a settlement that would burgeon into a thriving modern metropolis (Figure 22) (Figure 23).

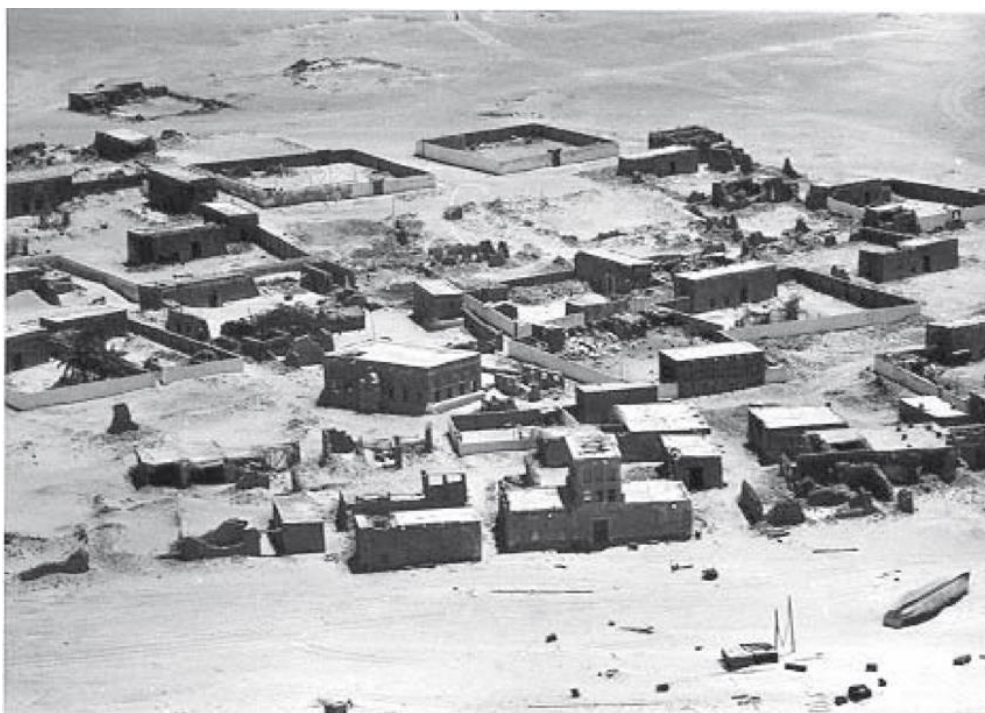


Figure 22. Abu Dhabi's Urban Skyline [49]

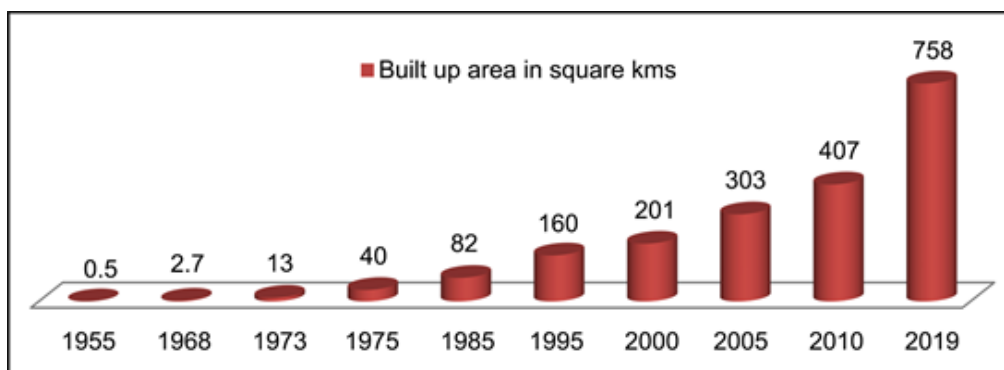


Figure 23. Abu Dhabi's Built Area From 1955 to 2019 [62]

Centuries developed, precipitating seismic transformations in both industry and influence. Outstanding among these shifts was the advent of oil and gas in recent decades, heralding a revolutionary epoch in Abu Dhabi's development. The perceptive onset occurred in 1958, with the advantageous finding beneath a historical pearling bed in the Gulf. This milestone precipitated Abu Dhabi's inaugural venture into oil exports in 1962, orchestrating the prelude to a remarkable orbit. In 1966, the venerable Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan ascended to rulership, subsequently catalyzing the formation of the United Arab Emirates in 1971. His sagacious stewardship provided the bedrock for a nation that embraces its cultural heritage, embraces enlightened governance, and underpins its strength with a robust economy. Chronologically, the Bani Yas tribe's establishment on Abu Dhabi Island in 1761 marked the inception of settlement. Successive decades witnessed the ascendancy of Sheikh Shakhbut bin Dhiyab Al Nahyan in the 1790s, positioning Abu Dhabi Island as the de facto capital of the Bani Yas tribal confederation. Towards the concluding years of the 1810s, Sheikh Tahnun bin Shakhbut Al Nahyan assumed leadership, navigating the region through intricate diplomatic manoeuvres.

Between 1820 and 1853, a General Treaty of Peace was negotiated between the British Government and the rulers of Sheikdoms, culminating in the establishment of the Trucial States, later evolving into the United Arab Emirates. The 19th century bore witness to leadership transitions, from Sheikh Tahnun's governance to the succession of Saeed bin Tahnun Al Nahyan in 1845. The cover of rulership spanned through influential leaders such as Zayed bin Khalifa Al Nahyan. The following century unfolded with important moments, from Sheikh Zayed Bin Khalifa Al Nahyan's death in 1909 to the establishment of the Abu Dhabi Petroleum Company in 1939. The oil discovery on Das Island in 1958 marked a transformative phase, culminating in the city's maiden oil exports in 1962. The historic amalgamation on December 2, 1971, heralded the formation of the United Arab Emirates, with Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan assuming the mantle of the inaugural President. Subsequent decades witnessed the rapid modernization of Abu Dhabi, with landmark achievements such as the completion of the main road (E11) in 1980 and the establishment of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in 1981 [62]. The shift of Abu Dhabi's status to the capital of the UAE in 1996 signified 25 years of independence and commemorated Sheikh Zayed's 30th anniversary as ruler. The early 2000s witnessed milestones including the inauguration of Marina Mall and Abu Dhabi Mall in 2001, the launch of Etihad Airways in 2003, and the passage of Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan in (Figure 24).

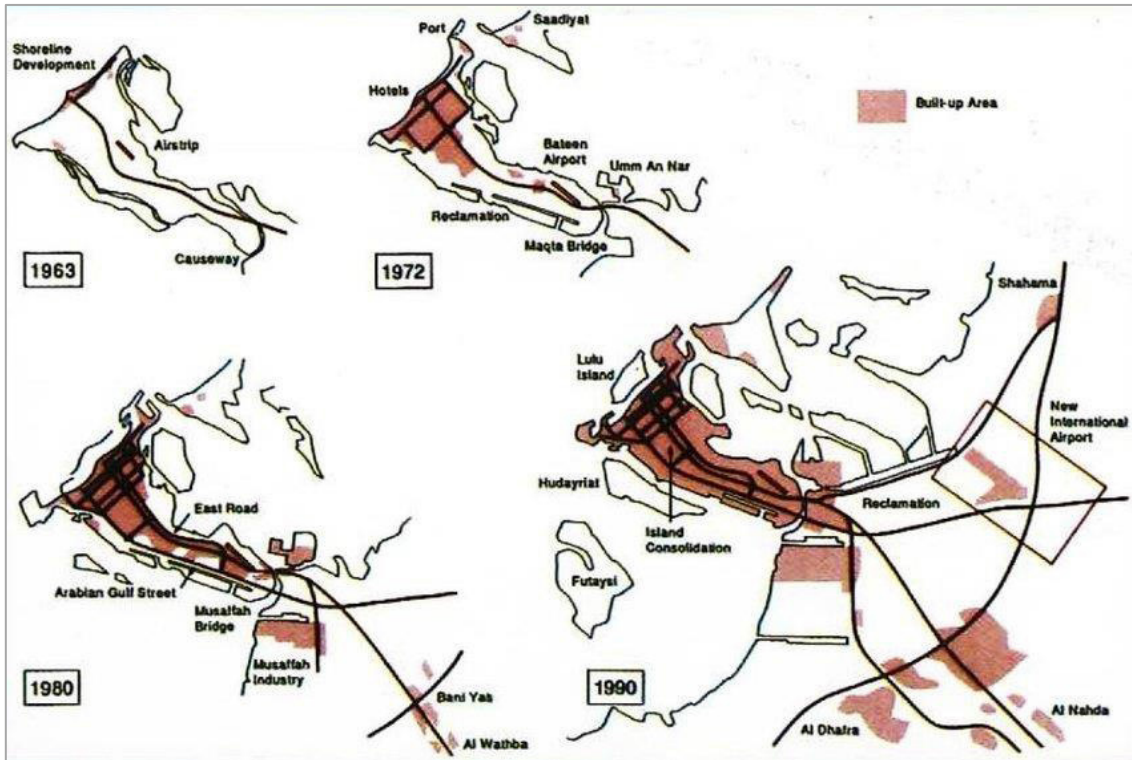


Figure 24. Abu Dhabi's Urban Evolution [65]

Urban landscapes evolved with the construction of landmarks like Emirates Palace in 2005, Zayed Mosque in 2007, and the inauguration of the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre in the same year. Following years marked achievements such as the establishment of public transport through the Abu Dhabi Bus service in 2008, the initiation of the F1 circuit and the opening of Yas Island in 2009. Cultural and educational institutions were introduced, including Ferrari World in 2010 and the establishment of the New York University campus in 2012. Yas Mall, the city's largest mall, opened its doors in 2014, while 2017 witnessed the inauguration of the Louvre Abu Dhabi. In reflection, Abu Dhabi's narrative unfolds as a profound testimony to resilience, adaptation, and the relentless pursuit of a brighter future. Its architectural odyssey, from ancient tribal roots to a global powerhouse, reverberates through the corridors of history, leaving an indelible imprint on the evolving canvas of urban development [62]. As Abu Dhabi's journey continues, it emerges not only as a geographical entity but as a paradigm of architectural metamorphosis, embodying the symbiosis of tradition and modernity (Figure 25) (Figure 26).



Figure 25. Constructin of Louvre Museum [50]

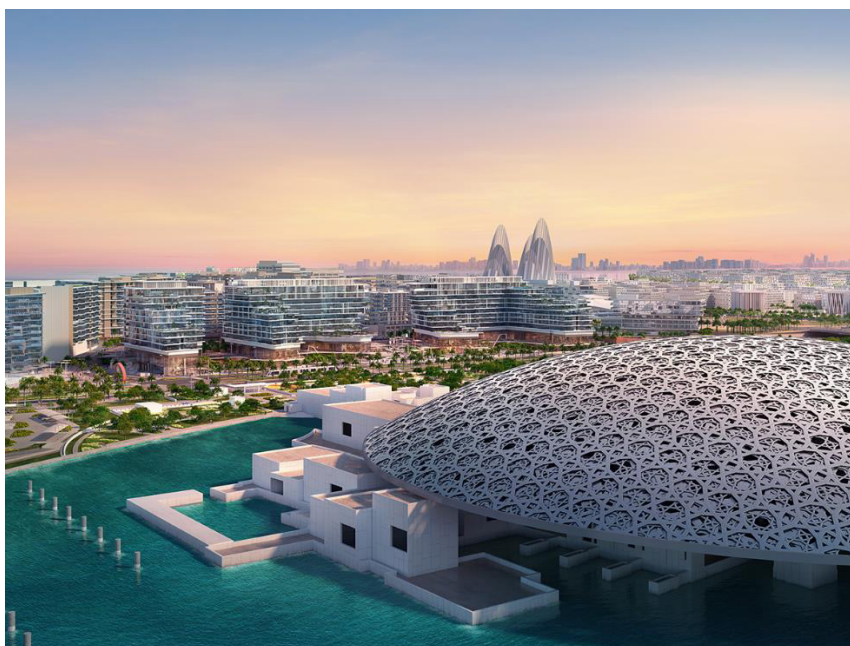


Figure 26. Louvre Museum [51]

3.2. Louvre Museum & Neoliberal Architecture

Louvre Abu Dhabi, an architectural marvel by Jean Nouvel, surpasses traditional paradigms by harmonizing elemental climatic considerations and ecological touch with a sophisticated aesthetic vision. Aiming for seamless integration within its geographic milieu, the museum surpasses sheer translation, bypassing the trappings of redundancy and convention. Rather, it aspires to spotlight the allure of unusual encounters, offering unparalleled access by boat or foot—a testament to the extraordinary spatial planning that precedes one's entry into a realm of captivating collections and cultural indulgence. The nucleus of this architectural opus is a monumental dome, spanning 180 meters in diameter, a variation from traditional Arab architecture. Its special design, a result of huge collaboration between Ateliers Jean Nouvel and BuroHappold Engineering, unveils a complex pattern meticulously layered in stainless steel and aluminium. This practice orchestrates a mesmerizing 'rain of light,' with 7,850 stars illuminating the nocturnal panorama. The intricate interplay between sun, dome, sea, and land manifests as a tranquil haven for art, making Louvre Abu Dhabi an exemplar of architectural invention, seamlessly woven into the texture of its cultural and climatic context [41]. However, it only occurs because of a neoliberal capital. To be able to build something gigantic like this at in the skyline in a urban; it would be unrealistic to consider the economical process (Figure 27) (Figure 28).



Picture 27. Louvre Museum Inside [52]



Picture 28. Standalone Megastructures [53]

Neoliberal architecture, a manifestation of the broader neoliberal economic ideology, has definitely shapes the contemporary urban landscapes and the architectural techniques. The neoliberal approach tends to prioritize aesthetics that cater to market trends all around the world. The result is often a sameness in the urban character. Iconic, flashy structures may dominate skylines, but their contribution to a city's identity and social fabric is often lose its identity. This contributan is a massive architectural success although it should create a discussion about the does neoliberal capital could be a beginning phase of standalone megastructures in the urban character. Moreover, the neoliberal paradigm tends to prioritize the role of star architects and global architectural firms, sidelining local expertise and vernacular practices.

3.3. Abu Dhabi Central Market & Reimagining the Urban Relationships

Abu Dhabi's Central Market, an antique city landmark, undergoes a transformative revival rooted in Gulf-inspired traditional architecture. From the usage of natural light, material choices, the senario of the space services to users. Departing from the same shopping mall sterotype, this scheme redefines the market, bestowing the city with a renewed civic nucleus. Embracing a modern interpretation of regional vernacular, the market seamlessly blends luxury boutiques, food markets, and craft-based trades within an architecturally curated environment. Designed for year-round comfort, the interior integrates the beautiful sunlight, vibrant shades, and water features, fostering a dynamic interplay of squares, courtyards, and alleys. Making a scenery atmosphere within the structure is a extraordinary example. The permeable boundary between indoors and outdoors facilitates a connection with public routes and squares, establishing a central venue for festivities. Roof panels, influenced by Islamic arts, adapt to climatic conditions, enclosing the space when needed. The octagonal-patterned panels echo traditional

zellij tilework, intertwining with Abu Dhabi's lush landscaping [63]. A cluster of towers, designed as a cohesive family, rises above, utilizing reflective facades and internal shading to harmonize with the arid desert milieu (Figure 29) (Figure 30).

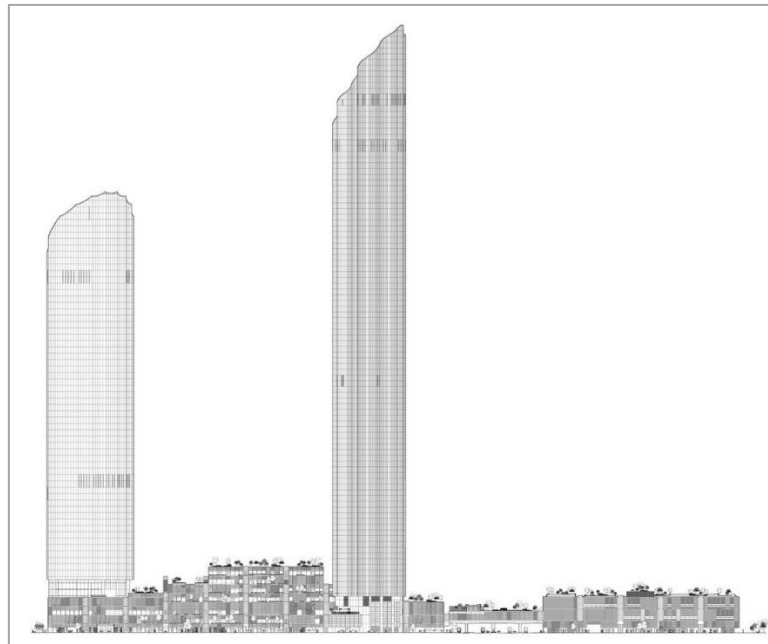


Figure 29. Central Market Section [54]



Figure 30. Abu Dhabi Central Market [55]

3.4. Bulgari Babilon & Reimagining the Urban Landscape

Authorized by the respected Bulgari, the temporary Bulgari Pavilion, conceived by Not a Number Architects, graced the Abu Dhabi Art event. Positioned at the entrance, the Pavilion served as an exclusive VIP lounge for celebrities, seamlessly blending luxury with innovative design. The architects sought to materialize Bulgari's ethos within a space that respects the heritage. The design hinged upon reappropriating prosaic elements, altering acrylic tubes into a self-supporting architectural wonder, symbolizing Bulgari's unique approach. Through meticulous prototyping and experimentation, the team crafted arches, arcades, and cupolas, forming a recognizable yet ethereal enclosure. The bespoke reference technique using polycarbonate dowels and pins not only streamlined assembly but also enhanced aesthetic cohesion. The pavilion has more than two thousand tubes, with ten thousand individual connections, weighing almost six tons, epitomize the fusion of familiarity and novelty [65].

Collaborating with Artisan, the lighting design aimed at creating a dynamic interplay of sunlight during the day and a mesmerizing nocturnal spectacle, where light flowed through the structure like water, continually revealing and concealing its facets (Figure 31) (Figure 32) (Figure 33).



Figure 31. Craft [56]



Figure 32. Pavillion [57]



Figure 33. Urban Skyline of Abu Dhabi [58]

4. FINDINGS AND RESULTS

The findings of this study listed towards resemblance in the urban character of high-density metropolitan areas, underscored by various indicators and resultant features. Architectural global language, as a unifying force, manifests through shared design elements, materials, and forms that transcend geographical boundaries. Globalization and modernization are the main contractors of a sense of visual sameness. Standardized construction practices emerge as a significant factor, emphasizing efficiency and cost-effectiveness over unique architectural expression. The result of specific architects or firms heightens this phenomenon, as their signature styles become symbolic of an urban identity. Zoning regulations and building codes, while essential for urban planning, inadvertently contribute to the standardization of built environments, influencing the height, scale, and overall aesthetic of structures.

Furthermore, the preferences for sameness, often driven by economic considerations, further entrench the replication of design elements across projects. Architectural competitions, intended to spur innovation, paradoxically contribute to sameness as winning designs set precedents for emulation in subsequent developments. These indicators collectively shape the urban fabric, fostering a landscape characterized by similar building materials, structural forms, and exterior facades. Encouraging citizens about this global issue might be the beginning of the first steps. Manipulating the neoliberal economy into systematic and unique architectural planning would be another critical issue for building resilient and unique urban character (Table 1).

Table 1. Main Phases & Issues Behind Them

Main Phases:	Issues Behind Them:
Phase 1: Beginning of Urbanization and Economic Growth	Rapid urbanization leading to a deficit of natural elements and a pervasive adherence to standardized urban character.
Phase 2: An Awareness of Environmental Predicaments	Depletion of green spaces and the emergence of a nature deficit within the urban planning framework.
Phase 3: Investigation of the New Urban Character	Imbibing nature into urban design, countering monotony, and nurturing a distinctive architectural identity.

Phase: 1. Beginning of Urbanization and Economic Growth

Problem:

The rapid urbanization at the onset leading to a deficit of natural elements and a pervasive adherence to standardized urban character (Table 2).

Table 2. Phase One

Phase- 1	Beginning of Urbanization and Economic Growth
Actors:	Architects, Engineers, visionaries, urban planners, governmental entities
Type of Goal:	Economic motivation, infrastructural enlargement.
Role:	Planning process, construction process, economic progress.
Resources:	Land, financial authorisation, specialized knowledge.
Nature of the Stake:	Prosperity and developmental height.
Patterns of Interaction:	Collaborative works and behaviours between government entities and developmental luminaries.
Network Complexity and Density:	A nuanced web with a level of complicatedness is considered moderate, sustaining a density of moderate volume.

Phase 2: An Awareness of Environmental Predicaments

Issue Tackled:

Depletion of green spaces and the emergence of a nature deficit within the urban planning framework (Table 3).

Table 3. Phase Two

Phase- 2	An Awareness of Environmental Predicaments
Actors:	Ecological advocates, municipal authorities, grassroots organizations.
Type of Goal:	Identification and resolution of environmental challenges.
Role:	Research, policy delineation, fostering public cognizance.
Resources:	Environmental wisdom, Urban Resilience, Research funding.
Nature of the Stake:	Advocacy for environmental robustness and conservation.
Patterns of Interaction:	Collaborative endeavours involving governmental bodies, environmental advocacy groups, nature protectors and community initiatives.
Network Complexity and Density:	A spectrum of interactions marked by moderate intricacy and density.

Phase 3: Investigation of the New Urban Character Issue Tackled:

Imbibing nature into urban design, countering monotony, and nurturing a distinctive architectural identity (Table 4).

Table 4. Phase Three

Phase- 3	Investigation of the New Urban Character Issue Tackled
Actors:	Architects, Engineers, Visionaries, urban planners, governmental entities, Local
Type of Goal:	Implementation of sustainable urban blueprints, infusion of nature, and cultivation of architectural diversity.
Role:	Not copy-pasting plans everywhere
Resources:	Funding directed towards eco-friendly initiatives, active community participation.
Nature of the Stake:	Nurturing of a unique urban identity.
Patterns of Interaction:	An complicated meeting with interdisciplinary collaboration
Network Complexity and Density:	A nuanced web with a level of complicatedness is considered moderate, sustaining a density of

Critical Factors and Strategies

Critical Factors:

- Genuine Governmental commitment to sustainability.
- Dynamic local community involvement and boosted environmental awareness of ecology, resilience, urban character and globalization.
- Integration of green spaces as essential components of urban planning.
- Advocacy for architectural diversity and reaching quality and uniqueness in architectural designs and urban planning.

Strategies:

- Strict enforcement of severe and vulnerable environmental regulations.
- Encouragement of green architectural paradigms and infrastructural development.
- Proactive community participation in critical urban decisions.
- Localization, adapting our cities to the local environment. Not copy-pasting the plans to everywhere.
- Fostering of diverse architectural aesthetics, coupled with the discouragement of standardized patterns.

The following table provides details regarding the indicators and outcomes of the similarities. (Table 5).

Table 5. Indicators and Results of Sameness

Indicators in the sense of architectural global language
Architectural design trends standardized construction practices influence of specific architects or firms cost-effective design choices zoning regulations and building codes developer preferences for uniformity architectural competitions
Result of sameness in urban character of high-density metropolitan areas
Similar building materials used similar structural forms matching exterior facades uniformity in height and scale consistent use of technology

5. CONCLUSION

Cities are not just spaces of consumption; they are spaces of struggle and resistance [59]. The co-occurring challenge of sameness in urban character, coupled with the simultaneous sameness, is a relatively contemporary phenomenon attributed to the globalization of urban design. The pervasive influence of globalization in shaping metropolitan urban language has impacted even the vibrant urban landscape of Abu Dhabi. To balance this trend, a shift towards localization, prioritizing the unique local context over global sameness, emerges as a potential strategy for mitigating the urban deficit disorder in Abu Dhabi and many other cities. Focusing on the preservation of nature and the cultivation of resilient, sustainable urban character stands as a transformative approach with far-reaching implications for the city's identity. Furthermore, the urban character is deeply intertwined with the socio-economic factor, still influencing and being influenced by the distribution of resources, opportunities, and power.

Recognizing the potential for localization within the urban landscape is crucial for addressing issues of economy and technology. In essence, the urban character of high-density cities can stop being a machine playbox that could ship to another city easily and on the other hand, it can be a source for interplay of diversity can redefine the narrative of urban character. Abu Dhabi's skyline has changed over time, and numerous plans and projects are anticipated to occur sooner than previously expected. Understanding the urban character of a city systems are complicated because neither formation nor transformation of urban form are random procedures in spatial materialisation of colonial associations. Apparently, there

must always be some regulations, encoded in form of proscriptive or prescriptive rules -as laws, normative acts, or as customary practices, that governs these processes [67].

When building our future cities urban identity of the cities should be formed by taking into consideration its associations of the environmental, historical, sociocultural and spatial values. In order to analyze the complex relationships between cities of our world, multiple case studies have to be performed to comprehend the distinctive features and characteristics of the cities. This approach allows for a detailed investigation of the parallels in urban characteristics. Such research is crucial for future studies and the future of architectural design and urban planning, highlighting the significance of viewing the consequences on a city's skyline.

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