"I spent over thirty years of my professional career only to see two percent of my work actually built."

I don’t believe there is any practitioner in Egypt who can boast such a striking remark. If Miguel de Cervantes, the author of Don Quixote, was alive today, I believe he would have been thrilled to see his hero re-incarnated in the form of an Egyptian architect Gamal Bakry.

The hero of our story is a twentieth century cavalier who is motivated by his ideals to conquer the mediocre environs surrounding him. As early as 1956, the year of his graduation, Bakry rebelled against the current practice - which has gotten worse since then. He sees Egyptian practice entrenched in a bad version of Modernism, that is very boring, only producing matchbox architecture, with facades mechanically produced as an outcome of an orthogonal grid. With his pen as a sword, waving it with excitement, drawing curvilinear lines and irregular geometry, he fought endless battles with his clients. He wanted to show them that to be different is not synonymous with insanity, a word that seemed to get attached to his designs for quite a long time. He is accustomed to refusals, denials and runaways from his clients to the extent that he is never cross with them. In fact, it is shocking to him to see a client accepting his design and actually building it. The client in this case is “enlightened” as one who has succeeded in discovering our Don Quixote’s “formidable” set of ideals.

It took Bakry fourteen years to be discovered by a client in the big city. The client was not so much different from him. He wanted to dismantle his orthodox upbringing and expected from Bakry a distinguished design, and hence the birth of Badran villa in the early 70’s. The structural consultant and the contractor took it as a-mission-impossible type of job to translate the drawings of Bakry into reality. Once it was erected it created a big splash in the society. It was so unusual in shape that people thought it must have belonged to a celebrity such as Abdel Halim Hafiz. The villa’s sinuous geometry was inspired from the mud architecture of rural farms, something that attracted the attention of Hassan Fathy, and led him to believe that Bakry was a phenomenon that was only produced by a society every 200 years! Ever since then, Bakry was gradually noticed by the Cairene public officials and the rest of society, and hence the two percent actualisation of his designs! Yet such a bleak percentage cannot only be explained by clients’ reluctance to accept him, but also by long series of misfortunes such as, replacement of governors who believed in him, corruption of contractors, along with other unethical scenarios, as well as the deteriorating economy. Yet the two percent clients, who built his designs, believed that his architecture offered more than just “bizarre” forms.

There is quality behind those forms, to say the least. Of all of the projects he undertook this is evident in his villa and resort designs. It is true that the rural image of Badran villa was responsible for taking the Mohandessin neighborhood by storm in the early seventies, for the prevailing villa design during this period boasted the latest fashion in Western architecture ... recycled that is. Yet this rural image was also responsible for giving each room top lighting and ventilation so efficiently because of the aerodynamic quality of the curved canopy projecting over the clear story windows.

Villas designed by Bakry in Dyar Resort were composed of equally unconvention-
al design shapes. The rural image of Badran villa was replaced by plastic forms of Modernism. The most popular prototype is worth scrutiny. The overall plan is almost an ellipse that cuts the orthogonal garden diagonally leaving the much bigger portion as a backyard. Consequently, this stunning site plan extended the facades of all bedrooms and living spaces to overlook the swimming pool and greenery of the backyard. Inside this shape is a logical arrangement that captures a strong sense of leisure. The living spaces at the ground level enjoy three orientations with its semi-hexagonal shape. Not only do we notice an added value in the resulting panoramic view, but also in the impressive elliptical terrace that is close to half of the area of the ground plan. Rarely do architects understand this point: leisure is all about socializing and having fun under shaded outdoor space, and creating the sense of openness from inside out towards the lush greenery and pool.

Inside the house, because of the polygon shaped spaces, you are greeted with multiple opportunities for cross ventilation in many spaces, such an important criterion in resort architecture of the North Coast, yet hardly realized by architects for the sake of orthogonal planning. The kitchen and the facing square terrace are intelligently placed to separate the living room from the dining corner. The master bedroom in the upper floor occupies the prestigious elliptical corner of the house, and the family room, at the heart of the plan, boldly cuts the terrace into 1:2 proportions, the larger portion is shared with the master bedroom. This is not pretentious design, despite the deliberate irregularity in forms: clashing with one another. Apart from the bathroom of the master bedroom that may cause mental stress because of the "V" shaped corner, the overall emerging shape became a design advantage rather than pastiche. No wonder this prototype villa was the hottest selling item in the resort.

Out of the two-percent-built projects there were some that have been sadly defaced by contractors; proving the original design of Bakry to be a missed opportunity. In Dahab resort the overall image suggests a large octopus crawling back to the sea, a form so much appropriate on the shore. But there is more to the resort than just an octopus - logic for example. The legs of the creature is composed of clusters of rooms that respond to the meandering contour lines of the site. Each cluster is on a different level, ending up with the total four hundred rooms viewing the seashore. At the heart of the octopus there are the services of the resort forming a crescent shaped forum where the swimming pool is located together with other open-air activities.

The resort’s view from the sea is awesome since the center is an oasis of plantation and actions, then stretching across the horizon and rising up towards the hilltop are trails of single story residences. The final impression blends with the site giving a very unique character to the resort. So much for virtual design ... the actual conclusion is something else: the contours were leveled, curves were straightened and variations in the design that used to respond to different portions of the site were abandoned for the sake of standardization and hence cutting down on cost. I imagine the octopus was eventually reduced to a small spider ... shredded by ants!

Since the last decade, the Egyptian Don Quixote has become widely acknowledged. The two-percent is rising, he is attracting disciples, and his office is winning important competitions that are getting built too! One reason for this uplift is that the society and practice are looking for something new, perhaps even non-conventional forms? Recent competitions have shown that what Bakry started thirty years ago is now in fashion. Yet the new comers in this field of practice, young and competitive, are obsessed with unusual forms, to the extent that they override design logic and practicality in many cases. Today, this issue is becoming a dichotomy.

To maintain a balance between the flashy irregular forms, and functionality design is not easy. Bakry is well aware of this dichotomy and is accustomed to turning it to his advantage: not only because of his graying hair but also because of the unique design process he implements in his office. There, architects in their twenties work side by side with others in their forties and sixties. Young architects are vigorous about experimenting with new forms, elder ones are restrained and worry more about the logistics of the design. Bakry is there as an arbitrator who seeks the fine balance among the eccentricities of all the generations of architects his office hosts. This process is cherished everyday by Bakry, to the extent of spreading the spirit of a consortium among his team of architects rather than the typical unilateral relationship between owner and his employees.

A fruitful outcome of Bakry’s office design process is the Science Museum competition that his team won. The design is a serpent like that moves in a crescent path leaving much of the land as a plaza for outdoor exhibition. The facade treatment is environmentally conscious; the one overlooking the street is sunny and solid while the one overlooking the plaza that is mostly in the northern direction is glazed. The skin of the serpent is partitioned into a series of pyramidal planes cascading in scales, thus allowing for indirect light to leak inside the halls. The form is novel because of the partitioning planes that symbolize the periodic progress of science throughout history. Along side its novelty, are compactness, efficiency and easy construction since regular truss frames carry the pyramidal planes. The museum is also humane. A curved shed, circumscribing the plaza and facing the museum building, was added to the program for people to sit under and acquire refreshments while watching the action happening in the plaza and behind the glazed facade of the museum. This simple addition transfers the museum from just a place for culture into an entertainment center, a concept so much common in modern museum design that is yet to be seen in Egypt. A study on the project cost revealed that Bakry’s entry costs less than half of that of the closest competitive. The sheer difference in cost proves how Bakry’s search for balance between innovative forms and basic design logistics finally pays off.

With this, Egypt’s Don Quixote seems to have finally won his battle!
الطبع و الحريرات المصاحبة لموضوع الكريستالات، توجد بعض المشرutan التي انتقد عليها أبناء التخصص. ماذا اقترح بعد النتائج أن ذلك متضمنةination، حينما كانت الأشكال المربعة غير مضادة في الثقافة، والميل إلى التأثير في جميع الأشكال غير الظاهرة. و بخلاف التغيير في الأشكال والثاني المستدام في جذوره المحتواز، وهو أن يكون النمو الرئيسي في الزاوية العميقة، الذي، مع استخدامها، ربما يعزز الأشكال، فإن النماذج الأكبر أصم من سبب التصميم بناءً على القيم، لتمهده، واعداً لا يعجب في أن النموذج كان الأكبر في المنتج.

و ضمن هيئة الأشخاص بالمثليين لموضوعات، يجري تنفيذ بعض المشرعان التي انتقد عليها أثناء التنفيذ. ماذا يقترح بعد النتائج أن ذلك متضمنةination، حينما كانت الأشكال المربعة غير مضادة في الثقافة، والميل إلى التأثير في جميع الأشكال غير الظاهرة. و بخلاف التغيير في الأشكال والثاني المستدام في جذوره المحتواز، وهو أن يكون النمو الرئيسي في الزاوية العميقة، الذي، مع استخدامها، ربما يعزز الأشكال، فإن النماذج الأكبر أصم من سبب التصميم بناءً على القيم، لتمهده، واعداً لا يعجب في أن النموذج كان الأكبر في المنتج.

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دون كيشوت المصري
خالد عصفر

أتفقت فوق الثلاثين عاماً من عمري المهني لأرى فقط التنين بالمال من أعمال مرفقة.

لا أعتقد أن هناك ممارسة ممارسة في مصر يملك أن يقرأ ما هو أكثر قراءة حكاياً. أناأتله
لمجربة كيف يقرأ رواية دون كيشوت، فلا
كان عاش حسباً، أي أثره أن يرى
بطل قصة قد인이 في هيئة متعلق المصري
يدعو جمال بكري.

بطل قصة فارس القرن العشرين، مفروض
بمثالياته لCTOR النسيجي النسائي و
بمراحيل أساليب وостей حسباً، نظرًا
لإنسانية الأهرامات، والسادات Amendments
المتمتطى، لجمال بكري، ولم يتجاوز
ملاحظة: نقل قصصاً ورواياته على أساس
القصة المطلقة، وفكرة في الأدبية، في
في بعض الخطوط، تكشف عن علاقة
القصة بالقصة.

هذا الكشك هو منطقية من دخان الفوهة،
في الوقت، ووضعية متعددة، ينتمي إلى
القصة الأخرى، تتمتع بثلاثة توجيهات،
بكل ما يبدو، على شكلها كيف المسؤل. لا يقتصر الأمر
على القصة التي أضيف بها المشهد الباليورامي
التجزء، ولكن هناك أيضًا التراث المضاف ذو
المشروع الباليورامي الذي تقرر مساحته تصف
ملاحظة: سطوع الدرب الأرضي، وقلما يتكلم
المصريون أن استنات وقوع
الصورة حالياً في الأدبي، والقلب
القلب، وخلال الاستINGLEن من
الداخل إلى الخارج يتكون الحضارة والموضوع
السماحة، ويبدو ذلك كأن المشهد
البهائي من بين الزوايا وال딪، فنان مريح
بعد فرض التفاؤل البسيط المضادة في قراءات كثيرة.
و مثل هذا التنازل في معرفة متجدد في الساحل
المضي، لا يراعي الكثير من المعنازل، بسبب
الخطوات الشقبية المنتشر في تلك القلقة السماحة.

Dahab Touristic Village
قرية دهب السياحية

Section in the Science Museum
قطاع في متحف العلوم