



Qualities in Architecture

Aida Kesuma Azmin



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QUALITIES IN ARCHITECTURE

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ELEMENTS OF LAYERS AND HYBRIDITY IN ARCHITECTURE: A CASE STUDY OF CENTRAL FIRE STATION, SINGAPORE

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this paper is on the introduction of the western Edwardian architecture into Singapore and the alterations done to this architectural entity according to the local context, which are found in the Central Fire Station. However, due to restriction of protocol, limited resources and reference available for the Central Fire Station, the paper will primarily examine the layers of the Central Fire Station on an observational basis. Thus, the building will be analyzed mostly by using comparisons with other elements and personal interpretations will be included in identifying the hybridity of this building.

Keywords: Layers, Hybridity, Colonial Architecture, Singapore

INTRODUCTION

Central Fire Station, located at the intersection of Hill Street and Coleman Street, is a western colonial building of Edwardian architecture style. The building was built in year 1908 during the British colonial period. Its significance includes the strong Edwardian baroque brickworks, of which the materials were imported from the Britain, and the alternate red and white plastering on its façade.

It is the oldest local fire station with a watch tower 30 metre high above the ground, which was once the highest viewing point in that area of that time. The tower once acted as a lookout point for fires before fire alarms were installed in 1915, however, in present days, it lost its function to the fire alarms and its higher surrounding buildings, and is inaccessible due to the erosion of the wooden structure hidden inside the brick exterior.

During the construction, the building materials such as steel I-beams clad in bricks were imported directly from the Britain, and the building style was quite similar to those of Britain, with some local aspects assimilated into the design. The approach of alternate plastering and exposure of brick also contributes the very prominent identity of this building.