

After Amnesia Learning from the Islamic Mediterranean Urban Fabric

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This book by Professor Attilio Petruccioli is an important contribution to understanding the built city environment. This is a task that requires far deeper deciphering than a study of the physical environment alone; behind it are the complex relationships formed between the building, the city structure, and the civilization which altogether give a city its character. Different typological processes are involved in the analysis. Petruccioli develops a method that proceeds from single building types to urban landscape and territory which he applies to understanding the urban fabric of the Islamic Mediterranean world. Rather than moving from the territory to the city and the house, namely from global to minute, the author moves from the smallest object to larger contexts. The reconstruction of the formation of Mediterranean cities through the successive levels (from types of buildings to neighborhoods, building tissues, and urban fabric), supported with drawings relating to various cities – Aleppo, Algiers, Damascus, Cairo, Fez, Kairawan, Mostar, Meknés, etc. takes into consideration the cultural and social processes involved in their historical development.

The book contains four chapters; The Fourth Typology, The Building Type, The Building Tissue and The Urban Organism, The first chapter presents the issues relating to the relationship between the building, the city and the civilization. It introduces “organism” as a typology classification after material, structure and system. In the second chapter, the author examines the building types in various Mediterranean cities. Chapter three analyses the building tissue and its place in the urban fabric. The author examines the relationship between the routes and building tissues, the courtyard tissue, the interpretation of building tissue and urban fabric. Finally, the fourth chapter deals with the urban organism of Islamic cities. It develops a method of interpreting the relationships involved in the formation of these cities which uncovers

processes characteristic of Islamic cities. The book includes original drawings of plans of buildings, maps of cities, graphics of different building types and many other illustrations.

Attilio Petruccioli is an authority in architecture and urbanism in Islamic cities. He is Dean of the School of Architecture and Professor of Landscape Architecture at the Polytechnic University of Bari. He specializes on the architecture of developing countries, particularly the Islamic cities, and has published more than twenty books on this subject. He is the editor-in-chief of the Journal of the Islamic Environmental Design Research Centre.

Courtesy Newsletter OIC Research Centre January-May 2009, No. 78 for Islamic History, Art and Culture Istanbul, Turkey