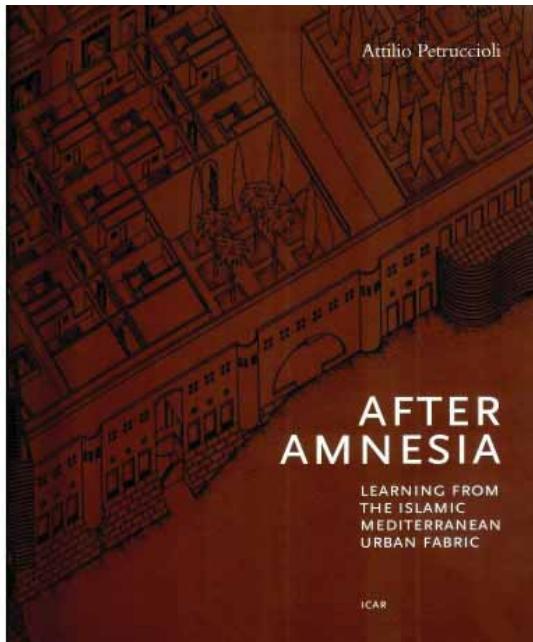


A CALL FOR TRANSLATION: "AFTER AMNESIA: LEARNING FROM THE ISLAMIC MEDITERRANEAN URBAN FABRIC, 2007" BY ATTILIO PETRUCCIOLI

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The new book **"After Amnesia: Learning from the Islamic Mediterranean Urban Fabric, 2007"** by **Attilio Petruccioli** comes after marvelous efforts

he has undertaken in articulating the need for understanding the city, its structure, fabric, and the essence behind the physical manifestation of the Islamic/Mediterranean Urbanism. Through this and previous publications, professor Petruccioli is a well known authority in architecture and urbanism in countries with Muslim traditions. His three decades of experience on this subject are clearly reflected in this book.

The book is constituted in beautifully illustrated four chapters, each of which addresses a specific aspect of the physical realities of the Islamic city. The first chapter introduces issues that pertain to the dialectic relationship between buildings, cities, and civilizations and highlights the typological processes involved. The second chapter involves a typological analysis of the Islamic houses which formed the structure of many cities including Fez, Mostar, Aleppo, and Algiers--among others. Chapter 3 addresses the physical aspects of the building tissue in the Islamic city and the dialectic relations between the building tissue and the larger contextual fabric. In chapter 4, the city is analytically described as an urban organism;

it also involves methods of interpretation while at the same time concluding with the fact that Islamic cities have unique character, especially in terms of its spontaneity and intentionality.

In my position as architect and academic in architecture and urbanism, I can confidently argue that there is a severe lack of serious Arabic publications and Arabic reference materials. This is evident if one would search any public or academic library or navigate the World Wide Web. While there have been some writings or reports on the urban environments of the Islamic cities, they are scattered, difficult to have access to, or are published in obscure or low quality publications. In essence, this manifests the urgent need to develop and secure the necessary funds to translate and publish this book into Arabic. A logical reason is that the book is of high value to the academic and professional community in architecture, planning, and built environment studies. Such a community is exemplified by practicing architects, planners, landscape architecture and those who are working in these fields in the academy and their students. Therefore, it serves the interests of a wide spectrum of reader types.

Looking around in most Islamic cities in the Mediterranean basin, one can find that while architects manage individual buildings well enough, the overall urban environment in those cities is increasingly mismanaged. The reason is that many architects are lacking the fundamental understanding of the city and its evolution, how it was, its situation in the present, and how it should position itself in the future. Therefore, this book if translated into Arabic those who make decisions about Islamic

cities including current and future generations of architects and planners would have an easy access in Arabic to the fundamentals of development in those cities. This is not all, it will facilitate decision making based on understanding the evolutionary aspects of the Islamic city and its traditional fabric. Truly, this book is a conscious endeavor that deserves special attention by translating it into Arabic in order to have the full potential benefit to a larger segment of professionals, academics, and students in the Arab World.