

The Evolving Arab City

Tradition, Modernity and Urban Development

Edited by Yasser Elsheshtawy, UAE University, Al Ain

This outstanding collection, written by sophisticated and engaged Arab architects/urbanists, is a stunning sequel to *Planning Middle Eastern Cities* (2004). Like its predecessor, it does three things: effectively demolishes the monopoly ‘orientalists’ had over the topic; integrates grounded Arab scholarship with mainstream ‘Western’ critical urban theory; and, by detailing the diverse ways Arab cities are responding to globalization, challenges oversimplified debates on ‘The Global City’.

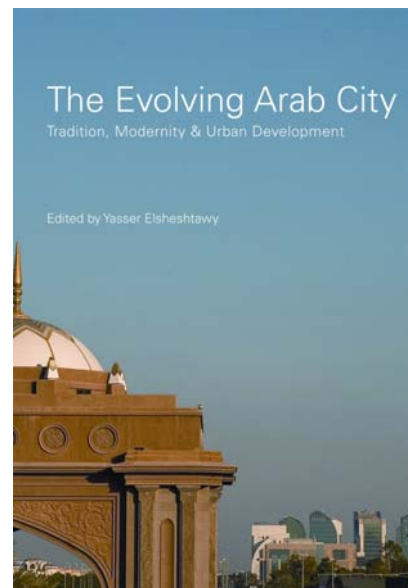
Studies of Arab/Islamic cities used to be the province of ‘outsiders’ who not only prematurely generalized to a genre, but to one encapsulated in timelessness. In contrast, the case studies included in the earlier volume (Dubai, Sana’a, Baghdad, Algiers, Tunis, and Cairo), now supplemented in this volume by studies on three older cities (Amman, Beirut, and Rabat) and five newer oil cities (Riyadh, Kuwait City, Manama, Doha and Abu-Dhabi), focus, often critically, on the cities’ rapid transformations.

Each case study traces the city’s colonial and post-colonial history, the evolution of its distinctive social and physical structures, and its intersection with the region and the world. Particular attention is paid, inter alia, to the effects of recent wars, migration patterns, petroleum prices, and the increased role of ‘rulers’ in city planning and real-estate investment both within and between Arab countries. Each case study traces the increased interaction between multinational firms and local developers as they strategize and compete to elevate themselves to global city status. Neoliberalism and State-sponsored advanced capitalism are all implicated in the painful task of balancing identity and post-modernity.

A must read!

Janet Abu-Lughod, Professor Emerita, Northwestern University and The Graduate Faculty, New School for Social Research

1. The Great Divide: Struggling and Emerging Cities of the Arab World, *Yasser Elsheshtawy*.
2. The New Arab Metropolis, *Fuad K. Malkawi*.
3. Amman: Disguised Genealogy and Recent Urban Restructuring and Neoliberal Threats, *Rami Farouk Daher*.
4. From Regional Node to Backwater and Back to Uncertainty: Beirut, 1943–2006, *Sofia T. Shwayri*.
5. Rabat: From Capital to Global Metropolis, *Jamila Bargach*.
6. Riyadh: A City of ‘Institutional’ Architecture, *Mashary A. Al-Naim*.
7. Kuwait: Learning from a Globalized City, *Yasser Mahgoub*.
8. Manama: The Metamorphosis of a Gulf City, *Mustapha Ben Hamouche*.
9. Rediscovering the Island: Doha’s Urbanity from Pearls to Spectacle, *Khaled Adham*.
10. Cities of Sand and Fog: Abu Dhabi’s Arrival on the Global Scene, *Yasser Elsheshtawy*



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