Architecture and Planning Journal (APJ)

Volume 22 | Issue 1
ISSN: 2789-8547

Article 4

January 2013

RE-HUMANISATION OF THE ARAB CITIESTHE CASE OF ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT

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Abstract

Urban revolution is bringing about a qualitative transform which can be linked to globalization of economy and of technologies. This in turn makes transformations to the “human face” of city. The traditional Islamic city, with its humanisation features, has a cultural, social, political, economic and ecological logic in terms of physical fabric, layout, and uses. This can provide a lesson for modern planning and design practices. Time has come to re-create the conditions that will restore to the metropolises of today their role as centers of cultural influence and democracy. Fight against intolerance, poverty, injustice, social and cultural exclusion, affirmation of solidarity as a fundamental value of democracy and human rights, promotion of a culture of peace and education for citizenship are just few of the challenges still to be taken up along the road to the humanisation city. Consequently, decline of concept and form in contemporary urban planning around the Arab world is discussed through studying the impact of modern Western urbanization on the urban forms in recent decades. Onslaught has affected modern Arab cities that have become culturally, environmentally, and socially inhuman as they lack to strategies and solutions to meet challenges of reducing or repairing damages brought forth. This study discussed the human principles shaping traditional Islamic city, forces that affect modern Arab cities and inhuman aspects of these cities. Furthermore, a case study of human face of Alexandria, the second capital of Egypt, was presented. The study aims at answering questions such as: “What is the meaning of “humanising the city”, and what are its requirements?”, "Do planning and urban design in our cities respond to human needs?”, Could principles of traditional Islamic cities be adapted to meet modern functionality and living standards maintaining its high congruence with our natural, religious and socio-cultural environment?”, etc. This study uses a combination of design research methods that combine quantitative and qualitative approaches by including both qualitative and quantitative data. The study concludes that absence of any correlation between humanisation principles and morphological characteristics of the modern Arab cities is the main reason of social, ecological and identity crisis of the urban communities. Some principles of traditional Islamic cities could be adapted to meet modern cities. It is still very relevant and viable to today's urban requirement of our society. Moreover, there is an urgent need to apply these principles in a modern context to bring our cities back to its humanisation feature.

Keywords

Humanization, Arab cities, Islamic city

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Urban revolution is bringing about a qualitative transform which can be linked to globalization of economy and of technologies. This in turn makes transformations to the "human face" of city. The traditional Islamic city, with its humanisation features, has a cultural, social, political, economic and ecological logic in terms of physical fabric, layout, and uses. This can provide a lesson for modern planning and design practices. Time has come to re-create the conditions that will restore to the metropolises of today their role as centers of cultural influence and democracy. Fight against intolerance, poverty, injustice, social and cultural exclusion, affirmation of solidarity as a fundamental value of democracy and human rights, promotion of a culture of peace and education for citizenship are just few of the challenges still to be taken up along the road to the humanisation city. Consequently, decline of concept and form in contemporary urban planning around the Arab world is discussed through studying the impact of modern Western urbanization on the urban forms in recent decades. Onslaught has affected modern Arab cities that have become culturally, environmentally, and socially inhuman as they lack to strategies and solutions to meet challenges of reducing or repairing damages brought forth.

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KEY WORDS:

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INTRODUCTION

"Changes in the world call for the development of a new humanism that is not only theoretical but practical. That is not only focused on the search for values - which it must also be - but oriented towards the implementation of concrete programmes that have tangible results" (Bokova, 2010).

"Just as a home is more than just "four walls and a roof", a city is more than just a physical space encompassing physical structures. In fact, it is not the physical, but the human that gives the city value" (UNESCO, 1996).

Old cities in Arab region were characterised by their human-relation that was developed in response to social and ecological factors. At present, these human features are becoming a central theme in the studies on sustainable development. They respond better to ecological concerns. They encourage social cohesion and bridge the gap of modernism between old model that lasted for thousands of years and post-modern city.

By advent of modernity at the beginning of the 20th century, Islamic cities began to lose their status and prominence; an event that coincided with the rise of the Western civilization (Mortrda, 2003).Then a radical change in the urban forms as well as social and ecological conduct occurred. Cities were planned to adopt the political and social aspirations for

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progress and to reflect the symbols of modernity such as the private car, wide roads, individual housing, zoning for land-use, free standing glazed towers and mass parking at the heart of cities. A dispersed form of city thus replaced the old compact model within a life span of three to five decades. However, studies recently showed that such a shift has an increasingly negative impact on various aspects of human life. Such a model is not only disadvantageous to the ecology but is also causing rupture with urban history, and social degeneration. The manifestation of this decline was a city that lacked any form of identity or cultural reference. In relation to this, current study attempts to resolve the issue of the lack of human features in modern Arab cities by identifying these features in the traditional Islamic city, and specifying the principles on which these features have been based.

What is the meaning of "humanising the city", and what are its requirements?

Although no two cities are the same, there are some shared requirements for their development in the twenty-firstcentury. The most important requirement is the need to give cities a human face. The objective is not simply"gardening" the city. It is to promote an urban development that is socially and ecologically sound.

It is true that cities must have a place in worldwide economic networks, but economy must serve human fulfillment, employment and, more generally, productive activities must make the elimination of poverty and social integration possible and consolidate democracy in cities. The UNESCO's vision of "humanising the city" is as follows (UNESCO,1996):

Humanizing the City as an ethical

Cities must serve the people who live in them. The real issue is improving the conditions in which urban growth takes place in order to rebuild cities of peace, democracy and development.

Cities must place the individual at the center of public policy, re-invent concept of these cities and realize the many ways of sharing in urban life. The impact of globalization on urban systems and the strategic role of large cities in the world economy are jeopardizing the quality of urban living. There is an urgent need to counterbalance the tendency to subordinate towns to the needs of business and the economy - which obviously are necessary focuses of activity and employment- by devising an ethical approach which subordinates them more to the needs of the individual, based on a better balance between men and women, cities and nature, and in which the quality of the environment is primordial and it is possible for town-dwellers to make town-living a shared experience.

Giving cities a human face is more than a Utopian dream

This can happen when initiatives of the inhabitants, who are both users and builders, are encouraged and supported.These challenges are to devise policies that will awaken the creative capacities of all those - men, women and young people - who live in cities. The city of the democratic age must be creating new initiatives, in which the ideals of emancipation, equality, freedom and solidarity can be achieved for everyone.

Cities and respect for Human Rights

Fundamental rights and freedom presuppose the exercise of citizenship and participation in the life of the community.

The right to housing, the right to a roof over one's own and one's family's heads, is a prerequisite for citizenship. Housing must provide adequate conditions of hygiene, material and human safety and privacy which can be summed up in the word dignity. Furthermore, a residential area is not viable without the infrastructure, particularly communications that link it to the life of the town as whole. The housing question is not only central to social concerns, but also at the heart of physical planning and development policies.

The City as living heritage attuned to ecological development

While large cities, as densely populated places, should allow effective management of natural resources, they were actually places of wasteful consumption of water and energy. They also consume an increasing amount of land by continuing to expand, to the detriment of arable areas and green spaces as in the case of coastal cities that affect the marine environment. Expanding cities have such far-reaching and intractable effects both on social structures and on natural environment while a resolutely forward-looking approach should now be adopted as the principle introduced of responsible urban development respecting the rights of future generations. Although conservation policies are sometimes applied, people are awakening to the ills of air pollution, noise pollution and impaired water quality. Measures must be taken to ensure that protection and enhancement measures for the urban environment become a source of income and hence enable the inhabitants of a city to take charge of running it. The foundations of eco- development sound must be laid as a matter of urgency.

The educational city

Nowadays cities, both large and small, provide numerous educational opportunities. The educational city is open to its environment. It maintains relations with other urban centers on its territory and with similar cities in other countries, seeking to learn exchange and so make the lives of its inhabitants more rewarding. The educational

city must give very high priority to cultural investment, education for citizenship as well as basic and lifelong education for its population. It must assume responsibility for the education, advancement and development of all its inhabitants, beginning with children and young people. Children and young people are not passive participants in the life of society and therefore of towns and cities. Depending on how mature they are, they may therefore participate in the life of community, in particular through advisory services for children and young people at municipal level.

Towards participatory urban governance

There is often a mismatch between demographic development in large cities and institutional structures for their management. However, although practice of negotiation and partnership between different urban participants may be seen as the best approach in the governance of cities, in no way should public authorities give up their role, in particular with regard to basic infrastructures such as of roads, water supplies and drainage and major housing schemes.

Furthermore, a democratic and effective form of urban governance is based on the participation of city-dwellers and citizens' organizations in the life of their community.

The past: Human principles that affect the design aspects of the traditional Islamic city

Islam is seen by many scholars as an urban religion (Fischel, 1956), (Hassan, 1972), which favors communal practice on individual worship. Although, piety is the only source of appraisal, it is widely accepted that most of Islam's teaching is best practiced in an urban setting. It is not surprising that Islam made particular emphasis on the form and design of the city enabling it a greater functionality and responsiveness to meet the principles of humanization. This part presents an analysis of spatial and functional arrangements of traditional Islamic city and assesses their socio-cultural and ecological meanings. A number of human principles played decisive roles in ordering and shaping plan and form of the traditional Islamic city. In general this involved the following:

Natural laws:

The first principle that defined much of the character of the traditional Islamic city is adaptation of built form and plan of the city to natural circumstances expressed through weather conditions and topography. Climate has always been a major factor in shaping of cities. Five stages of climatic adaptation of the traditional Islamic city are identified. These stages are: (1) location and orientation of structures to take advantage of sun, wind, and water, (2) compact development in order to create deep shaded spaces within the city, (3) use of traditional materials such as terracotta, brick, wood, and lime to provide natural insulation, (4) hydraulic techniques such as gravity-driven channels to integrate water into the architecture of the city, and (5) organization of the interior house spaces to minimize heat exchange (Belkacem, 1982).

Religious beliefs and Practices:

Religious beliefs and practices formed the center of cultural life for populations, thus giving mosque the central position in spatial and institutional hierarchies. Cultural beliefs separating public and private lives regulated the spatial order between uses and areas. Thus, town plan consisted of narrow streets and cul-de- sacs separating private and public domains, while the land use emphasized the separation of male and female users. Consequently, economic activity that involved exchange and public presence was separated from residential (private dwellings) use and concentrated in public areas and in the main streets.

Design principles stemmed from Sharia Law :

Traditional Islamic city also reflected the rules of Sharia (Islamic Law) in terms of physical and social relations between public and private realms, between neighbors and social groups. The privacy principle was made into a law which sets the height of the wall above the height of a camel rider.

This- as well as the laws of the property rights for example- were all factors determining the form of the traditional Islamic city (Hakim, 1986).

Social principles:

Social organization of urban society was based on social groupings sharing the same blood, ethnic origin and cultural perspectives. Development was therefore directed towards meeting these social needs especially in terms of kinship solidarity, defense, social order and religious practices. Such groups included; Arabs, Moors, Jews and other groups such as Andalusians, Turkish, and Berbers as in cities of the Maghreb. These were reflected in the concept of quarters (Saoud, 2002).Cohesion within this social order was the main reason why Islamic societies, over centuries, succeeded in creating homogeneous urban environments (Bianca, 2000).

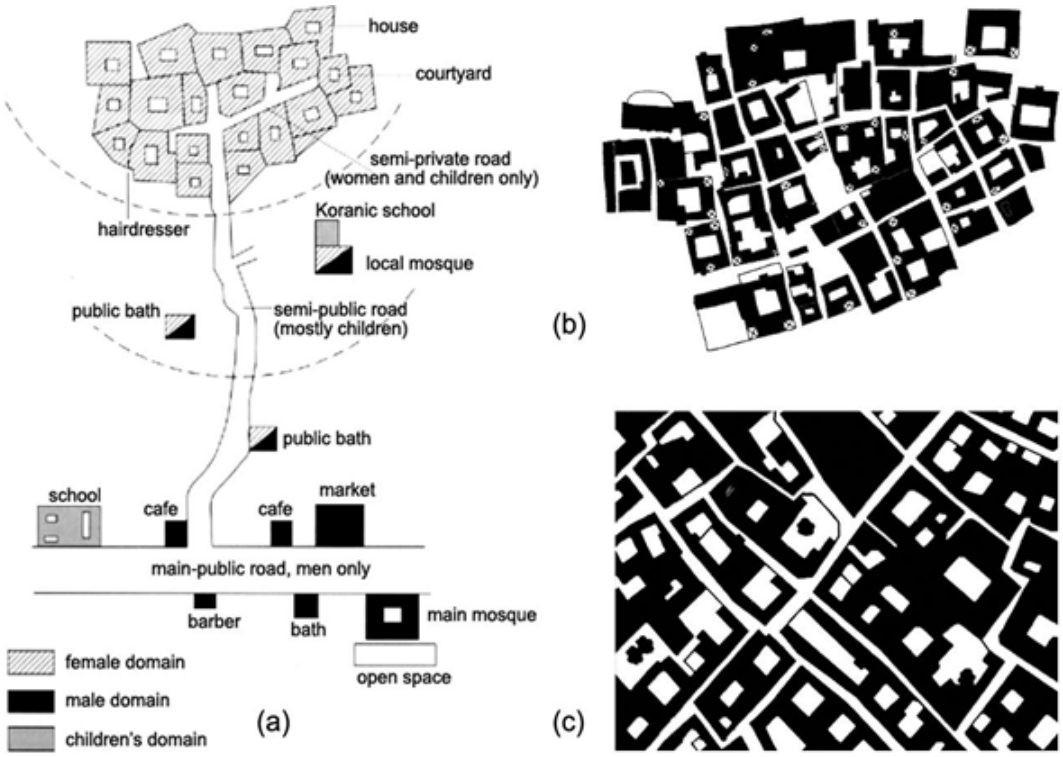
Factors such as extended-family structures, privacy, sex separation and strong community interaction were clearly translated in the dense built form of the courtyard houses (Figure 1-a).

Human features of traditional Islamic city

All of Islamic historic cities that existed in different regions appear to share some common characteristics and similar urban forms. This urban form enabled traditional Islamic cities to be united in terms of the way they facilitated implementation of humanisation. At the same time, however, Islamic planning principles became very adaptive and sensitive to the different environmental and cultural values prevailing throughout the different Islamic regions.

There is a general consensus (among scholars) that Islamic city has the following (typical) features: a central main Mosque, the market (Suqe) and other public activities such as social services, administration, arts and crafts, baths (Hammam), hotels (Waqala) and city walls and gates. Furthermore, the residential quarters that was described as cluster of households of particular quality of life based on closeness which is manifested in personal ties, common interests and shared moral unity (Eikelman, 1981).They were usually dense (Figure 1-b & c). They were also ethnically organized as Muslims grouped in quarters and the rest in others so that each group could practice celebrate its own cultural beliefs.

It is worth noting that whilst this multi-ethnicity was physically represented in the city in the form of clusters, it was economically and socially assimilated through a sophisticated judicial system which secured equality for all groups. Streets that connect between these quarters and to the central place were a network of narrow winding streets consisting of public and private and semi-private streets and cul-de-sacs (Figure 2).



(a) Socio-Spatial form of historic Algiers showing its general responsiveness to the needs of the community
(b) Dense built form of the courtyard houses in old city of Dubai (the Bastakia) (c) Dense built form of the courtyard houses in old city of Kuwait.
Figure 1 : Social principles of Islamic cities (Burton, 2002)

(a) (b) (c)
(a) Main alleyways in a residential district in Fez, with a gateway leading into a semi-private dead-end alley on the left
(b) Inside a dead-end alleyways, looking toward the entry gate.
(c) Residential alleyway in the old city of Baghdad with the typical projections of the upper floor rooms into the street.
Figure 2 : Human factors in Islamic cities (Thinh, 2002)

By the 9th century AD, religious role was replaced by political motives as various parts of the Muslim World broke their traditional link with the main Caliphate in the East. Local divisions and conflicts, in addition to continuous raids of the nomads, have created a process of urban decline. Stability was not regained until the arrival of the Ottomans in 16th century. They brought peace, security and prosperity. These are the main ingredients for urban recovery and growth. The main role of towns was to provide military enforcement for Ottoman resistance against European domination of the Mediterranean Sea. This effort exhausted local resources causing another cycle of urban decline. By eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Islamic cities experienced periods of wide spread disease and famine. That was followed by falling in the hands of colonial powers. The final event was the death sentence for the traditional Islamic city through the introduction of new alien morphological, socio-cultural and economic characteristics. European town created new situation and slowly emptied Islamic city from its functional viability. After independence, Islamic countries, in their quest for development, adopted a policy of modernization leading to further alienation of little left of traditional Islamic city.

The Present: "Westernized Arabian city", the absence of Humanisation

Transformation of Arab city until end of 20th century can be summarized by a gradual shift from an human urban texture of pedestrian scale and formal homogeneity of physical environment into an inhumane fabric of vehicular scale and formal fragmentation of physical environment, thus, from a social order based on total harmony and integration into a social order based on economical and technological dominance and social segregation and disintegration (Cetin, 2010) . In modern city, shaping forces are more global: colonization that has been a major factor in shaping cities in the non-western countries (Malik, 2001), population increase, rural-urban migration, economics, oil globalization and modernism.

The aspects of decline in contemporary Arab cities' Human Face

On one hand, population increase and chronic rural-urban migration in some cities was ineffectively addressed. On the other hand, "Oil Urbanization" over the last 50 years has played a role transforming urban aspects of the Arabian Gulf states (Bonine, 1989).The influx of vast amounts of oil revenue, along with Western technocrats and foreign workers, has served to shift the social order (Scholz, 1997). This oil wealth has given rise to a totally new type of Middle Eastern city, completely based on Western technology, building materials, architectural styles, and planning methods (Melamid, 1989), (Melamid, 1990). These cities are described as having wide avenues, rectangular street grids, huge traffic circles, minor architectural details and high rise apartment and office buildings on an ostentatious and unsustainable scale. In general, overt human features of built environment are rapidly disappearing. Adoption of the western urban pattern in Arab countries stems from feeling of backwardness and from an aspiration to progress. One of the features of modern planning is the empowering of governments, in the name of public interest, to undertake development and management of city.

Nowadays, social domain is increasingly having diverse meanings, depending on the society; rural or urban, developed/less developed, (Garces et al , 2003), (Scott et al , 2000). In general, it is concerned with social cohesion within a society, integration of minorities, cultural continuity of moral values and costumes, family tights, most of which have been degrading, due to industrialization, capitalism and the prevalence of individual values. In case of Arab countries especially in Gulf, social values are still conserved as tribal system forms backbone of political and social system. They are however threatened by the urbanization generated by modernism. Individual income, degree of comfort through private car and individual housing, and consumption trend are behind such degradation. However, it might face in Gulf countries strong resistance consequently to modernism, as material achievements are considered signs of progress. At the individual level, for instance, refraining from using one's car or from living in, or aspiring for, a villa would be a hard sacrifice to a layman in Gulf at present.

Back to the future

It might seem that re-conducting old human features of city is a mere nostalgia or a neo-utopian vision. However, adopting these features in the post-modern era is becoming more and more acceptable in literature (Burton, 2002), (Thinh et al, 2002).

Some promising visions as well as practical aspects for development of re-humanizing city are through the combination of the concepts of sustainability: (a) Environmental sustainability: Climatic studies that are concerned with urban forms conclude that compact city responds positively to stressful climates. It consumes less energy for cooling and reduces cost of operation of infrastructure networks, save time and energy of commuting and has less undesirable impact on environment (Golany,1996), (b) Social Sustainability: Social Sustainability for a city is defined as development which is compatible with harmonious evolution of civil society, fostering an environment conducive to the compatible contribution of culturally and socially diverse groups while at the same time promoting social integration through improvements in the quality of life of all segments of population.

The case of Alexandria, Egypt

Alexandria is one of major cities on the Mediterranean Sea located on northern coast of Egypt. It considered the second capital of Egypt, with a population of more than 4 million (Figure 3) (Central agency for public

mobilization and statistics, 2006). It embraces a coast line of about 70 kilometers, lies northwest of the Delta, and is boarded on the north by the Mediterranean, and South by Lake Mariout. It is linear between Abou Keer City in the east and Sidi Kreer Town in west and occupies 2,818 square kilometers. It is located at 171 km to the N-W of Cairo. The city is divided into 6 districts (Figure 4). Over 30% of Alexandria Inhabitants are slum dwellers in about 10% of total city area. Alexandria authority considers providing urban services as priority action in slum upgrading. Due its array of different archeological sites and buildings, Alexandria is considered one of the most important cultural centers in the world (Haag, 2004)

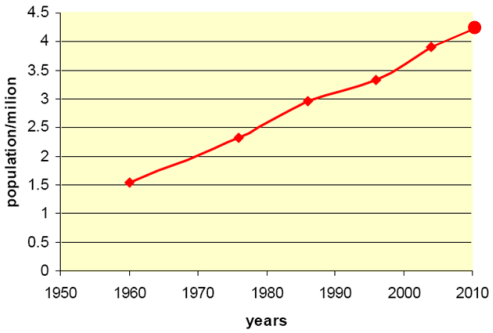


Figure 3: Alexandria city population growth

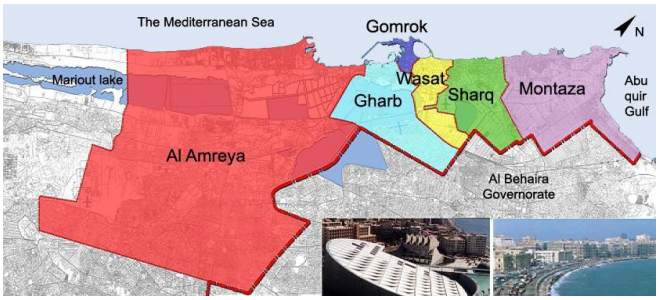


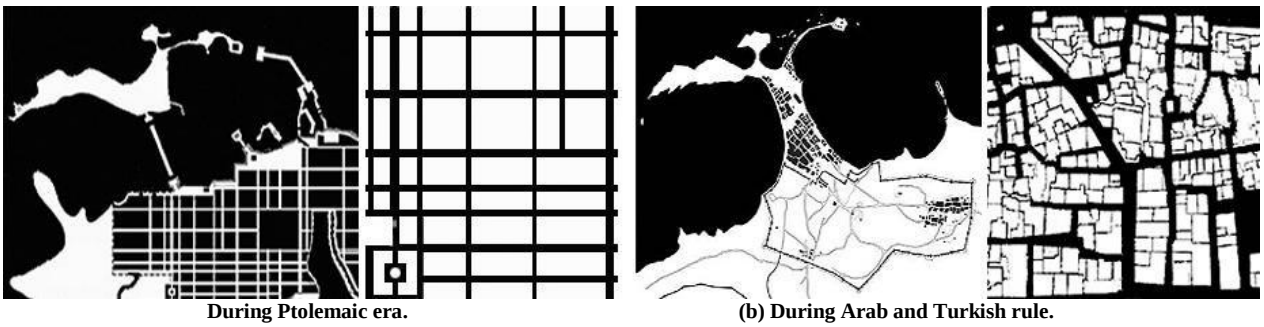
Figure 4 : Alexandria districts

Humanizing Alexandria, The Beginning

In ancient times, Alexandria was one of the most famous cities in the world. It was founded around a small pharaonic town c. 331 BC by Alexander the Great. It remained Egypt's capital for nearly a thousand years, until the Muslim conquest of Egypt in AD 641, when a new capital was founded at Fustat (Fustat was later absorbed into Cairo).

Alexandria's street network was laid out by its planner Dinocratis as a pure geometric gridiron (Figure 5-a). (Pollard, & R Howard, 2006) ,that highlighted the city's relationship to the Mediterranean, particularly through two main axes, the east-west Canopic Way and the north-south street of the Soma, that parallel and perpendicular to it (Vrettos, 2001). The street network intertwined with the innovative design of public spaces and new civic buildings, which acquired symbolic significance and became landmarks.

In 1517 the Turks conquer Egypt, and it became part of the Ottoman Empire. During this time, Alexandria was a small, deprived village. Most people during this time lived by the sea gate, as there was not much within the city walls. During the Arab and Turkish rule, they built a new settlement along the hepastade, which had grown in width (Figure 5-b).The moving off the capital caused further economic depression and slowed down trade in Alexandria. As taxes increased, population further declined, Alexandria was a mere village at this point.



During Ptolemaic era. **(b) During Arab and Turkish rule.**

Figure 5 : Maps of Alexandria

Human Aspects of Turkish Quarter

The primarily settlement was comprised of narrow streets and a traditional organic dense fabric of residential buildings. The architectural characteristics of the buildings in this area, which majority were constructed at early beginning of 16th Century, are actually reflecting the economical, social and cultural structure of that era. Most of these buildings generally are low-rise residences of 3 to 4 stories, built up using cut stones (Figure 6).

(a) Human scale of structures. **(b) Urban open space.** **(c) Organic dense fabric**

Figure 6 : Physical characteristics of Turkish Quarter in Alexandria

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By the end of the eighteenth century, and following centuries of decline during the Ottoman rule, Alexandria was reduced to one organic urban quarter, the Gomrok with less than 5000 inhabitants each (Reimer, 1988).The first half of the nineteenth century however, witnessed a turning point in the history with its exposure to Western European influences. These influences were reflected in urban space whereby Alexandria underwent new Europeanized urban form (Starr, 2005).

The ensuing urban form had many morphological characteristics especially, its division into a traditional quarter (the Gomrok) and a Europeanized quarter. Most importantly, the new street network was remarkably formed of a regular geometric gridiron.

From the late 19th century, Alexandria became a major center of the international shipping industry and one of the most important trading centers in the world, both because it profited from easy overland connection between the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea, and the lucrative trade in Egyptian cotton.

Human face of Alexandria Today Quarter

Alexandria witnessed rapid population growth by the second half of the nineteenth century (Tung, 2001). The city struggled to cope with the increased demands on its civic spaces and structures. Therefore, physical, environmental and social aspects dramatically affected the "human face" of the city. They are as follows:

Physical Aspects :

City level town plan analysis reveals that the current plan depends on: the diagonal nineteenth-century street network and associated pavements and public squares, a major street, and designs for contemporary civic structures. However, many problems have occurred: the nineteenth-century gridiron street network received facelifts including rehabilitation and improvements to its associated pavements and public open spaces but the pavements are extremely high (25-30 cm) and narrow (mostly less than 1m) with dreadful paving.

Furthermore, human behaviour spoils this improvement by adding barriers to reserve a place for car parking and using pavements as extension for shops (Figure7).

As a result of lack of car parking, the residents tend to go to regional shopping malls frequently rather than using district shopping malls. The residents also tend to send their children to private schools near the edge of the city away from their neighborhoods. Furthermore, there is a lack in gardens and other open recreation areas (0.5 m2 per capita, it must be between 15-30 m per capita).

Alexandria's Corniche (nineteenth century waterfront road) underwent rehabilitation and widening (the project includes the increasing of the road width to 6 traffic lanes, 45 m) to facilitate traffic movement regardless the separation occurred between residence area and the beach. Accordingly, accident ratio is rapidly increasing. Furthermore, rehabilitation did not consider the human aspects especially forestation, gardening, landscape furnishing, etc.

(Figure 8). Finally, the city witnessed a wide wave of destruction of old and sometimes heritage villas, and high-rise contemporary civic structures were constructed instead like "San Stefano Grand Plaza" complex building and many other residential buildings (Figure 9).

(a) Narrow and high pavements(b) Car parking reserving barriers(c) Lack of car parking

Figure 7: Lack of humanization features in streets.

(a) The Cornich as an edge. (b) Widening the Cornich to facilitate traffic. (c) Lack of human features.
Figure 8: Lack of humanization features in Alexandria's Cornich.

(a) Within neighbourhoods. (b) Waterfront high-rise buildings. (c) San Stefano GrandPlaza.
Figure 9: High-rise structures

Environmental Aspects :

Environmental concerns are integrated in planning via a Committee on Environmental Impact, but implementation seems to be out of touch with local knowledge. Although regulations, ordinances and byelaws existing to regulate the activities that affect the urban environment, the city suffers some environmental problems which affect the public health negatively.

The main awful environmental aspect that residents deal with daily is the spread of garbage on pavements and streets as a result of inefficient collection system.

Social Aspects :

Alexandrian community, as many Arab communities, suffers from social degradation in some aspects such as increasing of some slums inhabited by low-income families, lack of adequate democratic decision-making in town planning as well as feeble social solidarity.

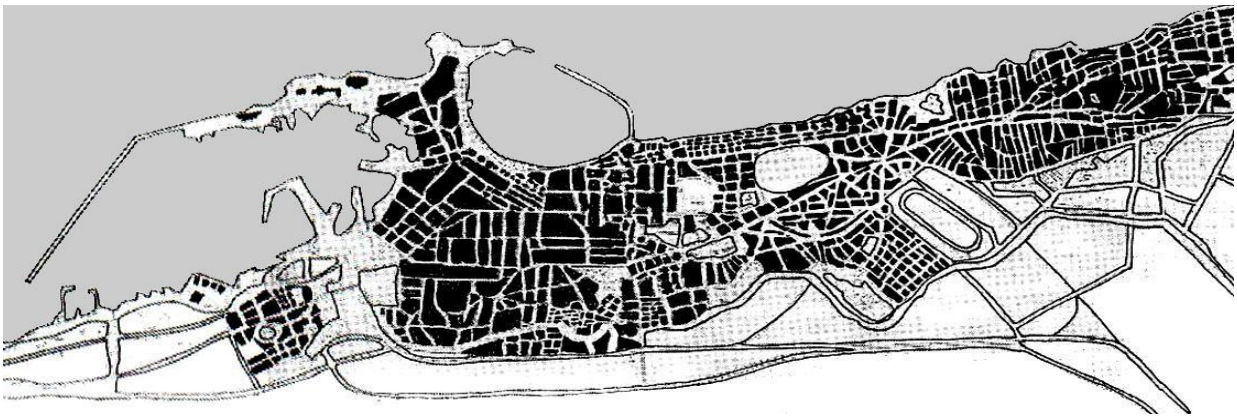

Figure 10: Map of Alexandria 2011

Practical Study

Physical Aspects :

This study used cluster sampling method for selecting samples. The cluster is a group of population members with similar characteristics: they are from The Arab Academy, live in the same district and have adequate knowledge in terms of urban planning. A draft questionnaire for the current study was prepared for establishing validity and pilot testing. The study applied group of experts' review questionnaires to identify potential problems and gather an understanding of the respondent's task. The panel of experts included professors from The Arab Academy. Questions that possibly cannot derive useful data were discarded, and the final revisions and changes on the questionnaire were made.

According to Sekaran (Sekaran, 2006), the sample size was calculated through the relationship between the sample size and the district population size. The study selected 3 clusters live in 3 districts having the same characteristics. They are as follows: cluster A consists of 37 members representing Montaza district, cluster B consists of 37 members representing Sharq district and cluster C consists of 37 members representing Wasat district. The study was carried out on respondents who are faculty members representing 26% of total respondents and final years' students accounted for74% (Table 1).

District	Montaza	Sharq	Wasat	Gomrok	Gharb	Alamreya	Total
population	1173803	978675	519735	145558	375048	835209	4028028
% of total	29.1	24.3	12.9	3.6	9.3	20.7	100.0
Total No. of respondents	50	55	22	Nil	Nil	Nil	127
No. of faculty members	6	19	8	Nil	Nil	Nil	33
No. of final years' students	44	36	14	Nil	Nil	Nil	94

Table 1: Districts population and respondents selective sample Title.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part aims to know urban problems facing the respondents in their neighborhoods. The second part consists of three sections. The aim of the first section was to uncover the respondents' desire to deal with some human urban features. The aim of the second section was to assess the respondents' interest in some social aspects. The aim of the third section was to find out the respondents' interest in some ecological urban issues.

All questions were in the form of a rating scale and were about 12 of the human aspects suggested to be in recent urban planning principles.

Descriptive Analysis of Part 1:

The descriptive profile of problems facing respondents with regard to the human face of the neighborhoods in which they live is shown in Table 2. The respondents were requested to state their opinion using a three-item type scale, ranging from 1 (No problem) to 3 (Big problem).

The mean ranged between 1.3- 2.7 while the standard deviation ranged from 0.5- 0.9. This illustrates that the respondent's answers are not significantly different from the mean response. Surveys revealed that majority of respondents consider lack of car parking as a big problem (84.3%). They reported that increasing of noise level caused by traffic and schools (54.3%) and lack of wide furnishing pavements (46.5%) are also big problems (Table 3). As regards the severe shortage of green areas, the majority of the respondents (41.7%) regarded it as a big problem.

	Urban Problem	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
P1	Lack of basic services	127	1.00	3.00	1.3	0.5
P2	Lack of wide furnishing pavements Penetration of	127	1.00	3.00	2.2	0.8
P3	Highways through the residential areas Lack of	127	1.00	3.00	1.9	0.9
P4	adequate car parking places	127	1.00	3.00	2.7	0.7
P5	Using cars in local travels inside the neighbourhood	127	1.00	3.00	1.9	0.7
P6	Children go to far primary and prparatory schools	127	1.00	3.00	1.8	0.8
P7	Lack of green areas	127	1.00	3.00	2.1	0.9
P8	Increasing of noise level	127	1.00	3.00	2.3	0.8
P9	Non-effective garbage assembly system	127	1.00	3.00	1.9	0.8
P10	Air pollution	127	1.00	3.00	1.8	0.8
P11	Lack of security feeling	127	1.00	3.00	1.5	0.7
P12	High rate of harassment in streets, especially for girls	127	1.00	3.00	2.0	0.8
	Valid N (listwise)	127				

Table 2: The urban problems facing the respondents: Statistics analysis

	Scale Rating	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
P1	No problem	95	74.8	74.8	74.8
	To some extent	31	24.4	24.4	99.2
	Big problem	1	.8	.8	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	
P2	No problem	36	28.3	28.3	28.3
	To some extent	32	25.2	25.2	53.5
	Big problem	59	46.5	46.5	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	
P3	No problem	59	46.5	46.5	46.5
	To some extent	23	18.1	18.1	64.6
	Big problem	45	35.4	35.4	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	
P4	No problem	15	11.8	11.8	11.8
	To some extent	5	3.9	3.9	15.7
	Big problem	107	84.3	84.3	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	
P5	No problem	35	27.6	27.6	27.6
	To some extent	68	53.5	53.5	81.1
	Big problem	24	18.9	18.9	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	
P6	No problem	56	44.1	44.1	44.1
	To some extent	38	29.9	29.9	74.0
	Big problem	33	26.0	26.0	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	

	Scale Rating	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
P7	No problem	42	33.1	33.1	33.1
	To some extent	32	25.2	25.2	58.3
	Big problem	53	41.7	41.7	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	
P8	No problem	29	22.8	22.8	22.8
	To some extent	29	22.8	22.8	45.7
	Big problem	69	54.3	54.3	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	
P9	No problem	42	33.1	33.1	33.1
	To some extent	53	41.7	41.7	74.8
	Big problem	32	25.2	25.2	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	
P10	No problem	56	44.1	44.1	44.1
	To some extent	35	27.6	27.6	71.7
	Big problem	36	28.3	28.3	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	
P11	No problem	75	59.1	59.1	59.1
	To some extent	41	32.3	32.3	91.3
	Big problem	11	8.7	8.7	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	
P12	No problem	41	32.3	32.3	32.3
	To some extent	47	37.0	37.0	69.3
	Big problem	39	30.7	30.7	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: The urban problems facing the respondents: Study results

Descriptive Analysis of Part 2:

The descriptive profile of the human aspects in urban planning is shown in Table 4 and 5. Respondents were requested to state their opinion using a three-item type scale, ranging from 1 (Not important) to 3 (Extremely important). The mean ranged between 1.7- 3 while the standard deviation ranged from 0.1- 0.9. This illustrates that the respondent's answers are not significantly different from the mean response. The survey revealed that majority of respondents are interested in some aspects that re-humanizing their neighborhood. They are as follows: wide furnished pavement (99.2%), landscape and gardens (96.1%) and availability of adequate direct sunlight and natural ventilation through urban regulations (97.6%). With regard the issue of using pedestrian-only streets, most of the respondents expressed interested in using this principle (83.5%). About 65% of the respondents considered grouped shops and schools within walking distance as extremely important features. As regards the living in low-rise building, the majority of the respondents (63.8%) regarded it as extremely important; this is followed by those who believed that feeling of belonging to the community is extremely important (59.1%). However, implementation of cul-de-sac network system was not at the priorities of respondents (22.8%). This may refer to familiarity with gridiron street network. The percentages of 42.5%, 40.9% and 38.1% represent those who deemed democracy in urban decision-making as extremely important, social relationships and natural environment friendly materials as extremely important respectively. Thus, awareness should be raised in these issues.

	Human Aspects	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Deviation
Q1	Pedestrian-Only streets	127	1.00	3.00	2.8	0.6
Q2	Culde-sac network system	127	1.00	3.00	1.7	0.8
Q3	Wide furnished pavement	127	2.00	3.00	3.0	0.1
Q4	Grouped shops	126	1.00	3.00	2.5	0.7
Q5	Schools within a walking distance	127	1.00	3.00	2.5	0.7
Q6	Feeling of belonging to a community	127	1.00	3.00	2.5	0.6
Q7	Social relationships	126	1.00	3.00	2.1	0.8
Q8	Democracy Low-rise	127	1.00	3.00	2.0	0.9
Q9	buildings	127	1.00	3.00	2.4	0.8
Q10	Neighborhood garden	127	2.00	3.00	3.0	0.2
Q11	Direct ssunlight and natural ventilation	127	1.00	3.00	3.0	0.2
Q12	Natural Env. Friendly building materials	127	1.00	3.00	2.4	0.5
	Valid N (list wise)	125				

Table 4: Human Aspects Preferences: Statistics analysis

District		Sum of the three districts			
Scale Rating		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Q1	Not Important	10	7.9	7.9	7.9
	To some extent	11	8.7	8.7	16.5
	Ext. Important	106	83.5	83.5	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	
Q2	Not Important	71	55.9	55.9	55.9
	To some extent	27	21.3	21.3	77.2
	Ext. Important	29	22.8	22.8	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	
Q3	To some extent	1	.8	.8	.8
	Ext. Important	126	99.2	99.2	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	
Q4	Not Important	16	12.6	12.7	12.7
	To some extent	28	22.0	22.2	34.9
	Ext. Important	82	64.6	65.1	100.0
	Total	126*	99.2	100.0	
Q5	Not Important	19	15.0	15.0	15.0
	To some extent	25	19.7	19.7	34.6
	Ext. Important	83	65.4	65.4	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	
Q6	Not Important	7	5.5	5.5	5.5
	To some extent	45	35.4	35.4	40.9
	Ext. Important	75	59.1	59.1	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	

District		Sum of the three districts			
Scale Rating		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Q7	Not Important	31	24.4	24.6	24.6
	To some extent	47	37.0	37.3	61.9
	Ext. Important	48	37.8	38.1	100.0
	Total	126*	99.2	100.0	
Q8	Not Important	59	46.5	46.5	46.5
	To some extent	14	11.0	11.0	57.5
	Ext. Important	54	42.5	42.5	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	
Q9	Not Important	27	21.3	21.3	21.3
	To some extent	19	15.0	15.0	36.2
	Ext. Important	81	63.8	63.8	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	
Q10	To some extent	5	3.9	3.9	3.9
	Ext. Important	122	96.1	96.1	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	
Q11	Not Important	1	.8	.8	.8
	To some extent	2	1.6	1.6	2.4
	Ext. Important	124	97.6	97.6	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	
Q12	Not Important	2	1.6	1.6	1.6
	To some extent	73	57.5	57.5	59.1
	Ext. Important	52	40.9	40.9	100.0
	Total	127	100.0	100.0	

* Missing respondents answer

Table 5: Human Aspects Preferences: Study results

The following table represents detailed study results of human aspects preferences. It divided according to the three clusters of the study.

Question	District	Montaza District				Sharq District				Wasat District			
	Scale Rating	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Q1	Not Important	6	12.0	12.0	12.0	2	3.6	3.6	3.6	2	9.1	9.1	9.1
	To some extent	4	8.0	8.0	20.0	7	12.7	12.7	16.4				
	Ext. Important	40	80.0	80.0	100.0	46	83.6	83.6	100.0	20	90.9	90.9	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0		55	100.0	100.0		22	100.0	100.0	
Q2	Not Important	26	52.0	52.0	52.0	29	52.7	52.7	52.7	16	72.7	72.7	72.7
	To some extent	12	24.0	24.0	76.0	13	23.6	23.6	76.4	2	9.1	9.1	81.8
	Ext. Important	12	24.0	24.0	100.0	13	23.6	23.6	100.0	4	18.2	18.2	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0		55	100.0	100.0		22	100.0	100.0	
Q3	To some extent					1	1.8	1.8	1.8				
	Ext. Important	50	100.0	100.0	100.0	54	98.2	98.2	100.0	22	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Total					55	100.0	100.0					
Q4	Not Important	6	12.0	12.0	12.0	6	10.9	11.1	11.1	4	18.2	18.2	18.2
	To some extent	10	20.0	20.0	32.0	14	25.5	25.9	37.0	4	18.2	18.2	36.4
	Ext. Important	34	68.0	68.0	100.0	34	61.8	63.0	100.0	14	63.6	63.6	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0		54*	98.2	100.0		22	100.0	100.0	
Q5	Not Important	4	8.0	8.0	8.0	9	16.4	16.4	16.4	6	27.3	27.3	27.3
	To some extent	4	8.0	8.0	16.0	17	30.9	30.9	47.3	4	18.2	18.2	45.5
	Ext. Important	42	84.0	84.0	100.0	29	52.7	52.7	100.0	12	54.5	54.5	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0		55	100.0	100.0		22	100.0	100.0	
Q6	Not Important					1	1.8	1.8	1.8	6	27.3	27.3	27.3
	To some extent	32	64.0	64.0	64.0	11	20.0	20.0	21.8	2	9.1	9.1	36.4
	Ext. Important	18	36.0	36.0	100.0	43	78.2	78.2	100.0	14	63.6	63.6	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0		55	100.0	100.0		22	100.0	100.0	
Q7	Not Important	10	20.0	20.0	20.0	11	20.0	20.4	20.4	10	45.5	45.5	45.5
	To some extent	20	40.0	40.0	60.0	21	38.2	38.9	59.3	6	27.3	27.3	72.7
	Ext. Important	20	40.0	40.0	100.0	22	40.0	40.7	100.0	6	27.3	27.3	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0		54*	98.2	100.0		22	100.0	100.0	
Q8	Not Important	26	52.0	52.0	52.0	21	38.2	38.2	38.2	12	54.5	54.5	54.5
	To some extent	2	4.0	4.0	56.0	10	18.2	18.2	56.4	2	9.1	9.1	63.6
	Ext. Important	22	44.0	44.0	100.0	24	43.6	43.6	100.0	8	36.4	36.4	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0		55	100.0	100.0		22	100.0	100.0	
Q9	Not Important	10	20.0	20.0	20.0	15	27.3	27.3	27.3	2	9.1	9.1	9.1
	To some extent	6	12.0	12.0	32.0	11	20.0	20.0	47.3	2	9.1	9.1	18.2
	Ext. Important	34	68.0	68.0	100.0	29	52.7	52.7	100.0	18	81.8	81.8	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0		55	100.0	100.0		22	100.0	100.0	
Q10	To some extent					5	9.1	9.1	9.1				
	Ext. Important	50	100.0	100.0	100.0	50	90.9	90.9	100.0	22	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Total					55	100.0	100.0					
Q11	Not Important					1	1.8	1.8	1.8				
	To some extent					2	3.6	3.6	5.5				
	Ext. Important	50	100.0	100.0	100.0	52	94.5	94.5	100.0	22	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Total					55	100.0	100.0					
Q12	Not Important					2	3.6	3.6	3.6				
	To some extent	30	60.0	60.0	60.0	27	49.1	49.1	52.7	16	72.7	72.7	72.7
	Ext. Important	20	40.0	40.0	100.0	26	47.3	47.3	100.0	6	27.3	27.3	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0		55	100.0	100.0		22	100.0	100.0	

* Missing respondents answer

Table 6: Human Aspects Preferences: Detailed study results

CONCLUSION

Planning and urban design processes and regulations applied by professionals and government agencies are based on modern ideas imported from Western cultures. This in turn contradicts traditional practices in cities found throughout the traditional Islamic cities. Thus, it is important that planners and designers should take traditional practice as a source of inspiration and make balanced integration between technological advances and traditional practices.

The study concludes that the absence of any correlation between the humanization principles and the morphological characteristics of the modern Arab cities is the main reason of the identity, social, and ecological crisis of the urban communities.

Traditional Islamic city met human needs in a more sensitive way than contemporary and/or alien methods do. Pedestrian scale, sense of community and eco-friendly, are key elements derived from traditional Islamic cities.

Some principles of traditional Islamic cities, but not all, could be adapted to meet modern cities. Some of these principles are still very relevant and viable to today's urban requirement of our society. There is an urgent need to apply these principles but in a modern context to bring our cities back to the humanization feature.

The study results that planning and urban design in our contemporary cities does not respond to many of our human needs. The results show the necessity of designing our modern cities using some human features, such as gardens and availability of adequate direct sunlight and natural ventilation through urban regulations. In addition, the results of the study illustrate the importance of using pedestrian-only street streets, grouped shops, low-rise building and schools within walking distance. However, implementation of cul-de-sac network system was not at the priorities of respondents. This may refer to strong familiarity with gridiron street network.

One of the major constraints in re-humanizing the city is the role of public authorities. Government is the biggest actor in the city. Its tools, means and approaches are proportional to its size. Government involvement in urban development should therefore be restricted to strategic level. The results of the study show the necessity of sharing the inhabitants in the process of re-humanizing the city. They must be given the means to express themselves in public and have an impact on their city. They must be placed at the centre of choices and decisions for the creation of a multifaceted city by measures to promote democratic discussion and participation. Therefore, the study results underscore the necessity to raise the awareness of democracy in urban decision-making.

Moreover, the study illustrates the importance of raising awareness of some environmental issues, especially the use of locally available natural materials.

In order to promote the emergence of humanizing the city, it will be necessary to boost the sense of solidarity by fostering an awareness of place and a feeling of belonging to a community destined to be a great city by organizing a whole range of cultural activities in the city that involve as many of its inhabitants as possible.

A process of humanization of global factors affecting urban planning should take place. This could be done in two broad ways; the first one is through the restrictions to foreign actors to respond to local specificities (such as climate, moral values, local cultures and tastes), and the second is through the development of the local human resources to comprehend, absorb and then formulate creative urban solutions that stem from the symbiosis between global forces and local ones.

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