



BOOK NOTES

How Petra was built: an analysis of the construction techniques of the Nabataean freestanding buildings and rock-cut monuments in Petra, Jordan by *Shaher M. Rababeh*, Archaeopress, BAR (British Archaeological Reports) International Series, Vol. 1460, Oxford, UK, 2005, 237 pp. ISBN 1-84171-898-X. Petra flourished as the cultural centre of the Nabataean people in Transjordan, 80 km south of the Dead Sea, from the first century BC to the second century AD, and developed a distinctive monumental architecture within the Greco-Roman world distinguished by its extraordinary tomb façades carved into high rock faces. This study is the first to examine the building methods of this city from a technical standpoint, used in both rock-face tombs and free-standing structures, set within a typomorphological framework of building design. It establishes conclusively for the first time that stone cut away from the tomb monuments was used in the town's freestanding buildings. While the focus is on building techniques, the presentation is set within a richly drawn picture of the city's territorial context and general urban form.

The towns of Palestine under Muslim rule, AD 600–1600 by *Andrew Petersen*, Archaeopress, BAR (British Archaeological Reports) International Series, Vol. 1381, Oxford, UK, 2005, 243 pp. ISBN 1-84171-821-1. This study is a synthetic one, drawing its evidence from a plethora of previous archaeological reports to answer two substantive questions and one methodological one: first, did the towns of Palestine decline under Muslim rule?; secondly, did they become Islamic?; and thirdly, what answers can archaeology contribute to these issues? The findings are that towns decreased a little in number but not simply from Islamic causes; and islamization was very gradual and accelerated only during the fourteenth century. The archaeological record is still very incomplete and gaps in knowledge of urbanization processes continue because the interests of archaeologists have often been elsewhere. The study makes copious use of evidence on regional settlement structure (territorial organization) and the internal spatial structure of

towns, in which morphological concerns are explicitly incorporated.

A fortaleza do Salvador na Baía de Todos os Santos by *Luiz Walter Coelho Filho*, Secretaria da Cultura e Turismo, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, 2004, 543 pp. ISBN 857505085-0. This is a detailed study of the historical evolution and morphological character of the historic fortress town of Salvador, the coastal capital of Bahia State in Brazil founded in 1549. It traces the original position of the walls, bastions and gates in relation to the modern street and plot patterns and what has become of them. It compares the defences to those of other Renaissance towns elsewhere in Latin America and Europe, as well as to the numerous ideal models of classic designers and military planners. The study then analyses the average dimensions and arrangement of blocks, lots, streets, and public spaces within the old town grid, as well as the harbour, government buildings, religious compounds, and other physical infrastructure – all in the comparative context of similar measures of representative towns elsewhere in the Hispanic world. It is a morphological case study, but with unusual value for cross-cultural study.

Origem e evolução das cidades Rio-Grandenses by *Günter Weimer*, Livraria do Arquiteto, Porto Alegre, Brazil, 2004, 223 pp. ISBN 85-87455-58-3. A regional study by an architectural historian of general urban morphogenesis in southern Brazil, with special reference to the towns and cities in the state of Rio Grande do Sul. Beginning with short chapters on the building types associated with early indigenous peoples, Jesuit missions, the Laws of the Indies, and African traditions, the book next considers settlements of the Iberian peninsula and colonial Brazil. Following this are chapters on the formation of an urban pattern in Rio Grande do Sul, the appearance of grid-iron town plans, planning in the Second Empire, and urban foundations and extensions in the twentieth century implementing ideas of modern sanitary planning and embellishment. Most of the morphological

treatment focuses on street patterns and building types, with only incidental attention to plot dynamics. The book closes with a critical look at the intended and unintended consequences of central planning practice and its influence on the quality of the built environment. The volume is illustrated throughout with evocative and creative drawings by the author.

Kommunalka und Penthouse: Stadt und Stadtgesellschaft im postsowjetischen Moskau by *Cordula Gdaniec*, Lit Verlag, Münster, Germany, 2005, 220 pp. ISBN 3-8258-6968-7. Published as a doctoral dissertation in European ethnology at the Humboldt University in Berlin, this study examines the Ostoschenka district in south-western central Moscow from the perspective of cultural geography with special reference to gentrification of the built environment resulting from the rise of a real property market in post-Soviet times. Treating the transition from public housing to private condominiums and refurbished townhouse residences as emblematic of the social changes in Moscow, the study explores the dualism of globalization and the reassertion of Russian nationalism evident in the urban landscape. Detailed maps record the pattern of social and economic functions within the district, as well as the general historic character, condition, and prestige of its old and new housing. The case study is thoroughly set within the context of broad social and political trends in the city.

Morfología de Chile y sus ciudades: análisis fisiognómico by *Ricardo Astaburuaga Echineque*, Ril editores, Santiago, Chile, 2002, 162 pp. ISBN 956-284-254-1. Resulting from seminar work in the architecture school of the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile, this study sets the general morphology of Chilean cities within the context of the nation's topography and geological structure. The book opens by considering the role physiognomy plays in various disciplines (medicine, history, architecture, geography), and proceeds to examine original town sites in relation to physical features such as terrain, river morphology and coastlines, the north-south grain of the country, geological events (such as volcanoes), and human movement (such as the establishment of long distance routes). Then follows discussion of city plans and their persistence over time, and the morphological implications of grid plan designs. The work concludes with some attention to the historical

development of Arauco and the towns of Araucanía. Unfortunately, the origin in coloured computer images of the many black and white maps reproduced as coarse half-tone photographs renders them difficult to read.

Towards sustainable renovation: three research projects by *Marina Botta*, School of Architecture, Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden, 2005, 156 pp. ISBN 91-7178-237-0. Since in Europe more existing buildings are refitted for habitation than are newly added to the housing stock, this doctoral thesis assesses how renovation can be made most environmentally friendly and sustainable. It posits three distinct forms: careful renovation, environmentally-friendly renovation, and sustainable renovation; and asks how the first two can be incorporated in the third. The study draws on the practical experience gained by the author's participation in three diverse renovation projects in Sweden. These were (1) renovation of suburban villa districts on the margins of urban centres of differing size, (2) the renovation of a 1960s-era housing block in the city of Norrköping with concern for the environment, and (3) the renovation of a housing area from the 1950s–70s period in Österräng in Kristianstad in a thoroughly sustainable way. The study looks at the varied goals, interests, and actions that guided these projects and evaluates their relation to long-term sustainability.

Historic cities of the Americas: an illustrated encyclopedia. Volume 1: the Caribbean, Mexico, and Central America. Volume 2: North America and South America, by *David F. Marley*, ABC-CLIO, Santa Barbara, Calif. USA, 2005, 1010 pp. ISBN 1-57607-027-1. David Marley, a historian, has written 60 (not 70, as the publisher's blurb promises) capsule histories of selected towns and cities in the New World with substantial pasts. In the absence of fully stated criteria the selection appears at times arbitrary and personal, but nevertheless interesting. The entries provide periodized summaries of general urban history for each city ranging in complexity from 7 (Oaxaca) to 16 (Mexico) chronological phases. Including illustrations, the entries run an average of 12 pages each. Aside from a tendency to stress natural and human disasters, the entries are useful for basic factual information and for the frequently provided town plans and the photographs of typical built

environments. The cities included are Acapulco, Bogotá, Boston, Bridgetown, Buenos Aires, Campeche, Cap-Haitien, Caracas, Cartagena, Cayenne, Charleston, Chicago, Concepción, Cuzco, Detroit, Fort-de-France, Guadalajara, Guanajuato, Guatamala City, Guayaquil, Halifax, Havana, Kingston, La Paz, Lima, Maracaibo, Mexico City, Monterrey, Montevideo, Montreal, Nassau, New Orleans, New York City, Oaxaca, Panama City, Paramaribo, Pensacola, Philadelphia, Port of Spain, Port-au-Prince, Portobelo, Potosí, Puebla, Quebec City, Quito, Recife, Rio de Janeiro, Salvador, San Francisco, San José, San Juan, Santiago (Cuba), Santiago (Chile), Santo Domingo, St. Augustine, Toronto, Veracruz, Washington, Willemstad, and Zacatecas.

Drosscape: wasting land in urban America

by *Alan Berger*, Princeton Architectural Press, New York, USA, 2006. ISBN 1-56898-572-X. The progressive decentralization of industry in American metropolitan areas since World War II has generated a vast and proliferating number of toxic brownfields that greatly complicate redevelopment. Alan Berger dubs the spatial saturation of this rapidly metastasizing process 'drosscapes', and documents it with stunning aerial photography and eye-catching maps and diagrams at a national and metropolitan level. Part 1 offers a review of modern landscape discourses from a broadly architectural and design perspective, and summarizes on a national scale the patterns of deindustrialization and expanding but fragmented built environment at ever lower densities, and the consequent production of waste landscapes. Part 2 presents ten metropolitan examples in the form of six-page photo/map essays (Atlanta, Boston-Lowell-Providence, Charlotte-Raleigh-Durham, Chicago, Cleveland-Akron, Dallas-Fort Worth, Denver-Front Range, Houston, Los Angeles, and Phoenix). Each consists of three aerial views of striking instances of land wastage, a map of metropolitan land uses relevant to 'drosscape' formation, and two charts, one of population density by distance from the urban core separated into four cardinal quadrants, and one displaying the percentage of manufacturing change (1977–2001) by distance from the centre. A second component of this part is a chapter classifying waste landscapes into six types (those created by dwellings, transition, infrastructure, obsolescence, exchange, and contamination). Part 3 offers a 'drosscape manifesto' in two parts, 'drosscape defined' and 'drosscape proposed', that advise designers how to

learn to love and work with wastage in the landscape instead of simply disparaging it. If the text and nomenclature are sometimes journalistic and overblown and the charts flashy and repetitive to the point of confusion, the central message about the significance of 'drosscapes' in the culture of American urban land use is legitimate, and the photography is simply superb. All photographs are accompanied by concise captions that fully identify their location and thematic content.

Town and country in the Middle Ages: contrasts, contacts and interconnections, 1100-1500

edited by *Kate Giles and Christopher Dyer*, Maney, Leeds, UK, 2005, 330 pp. ISBN 1-904350-28-3. This book presents fifteen papers with abstracts given at a conference of the Society for Medieval Archaeology held in 2002, fourteen on British topics and one on Byzantine Constantinople. Four papers hold special interest for urban morphologists. Two contributions concern town-plan analysis. Terry Slater examines the small boroughs and market settlements of Staffordshire, England, and shows that the boundaries, plot patterns and market places of the former easily distinguish them from the latter. Keith Lilley argues that medieval townscape followed a sequence of planning decisions that may in various cases have included symbolic purposes, such as block dimensions with proportional ratios designed to reflect Christian ideals of divine beauty. His strongest evidence comes from Grenoble-sur-Garonne, although English town plans are also examined. Sarah Pearson challenges the 'urban adaptation' thesis of rural and urban houses in medieval England, arguing that urban houses had complex and older antecedents within towns and that some urban influences then migrated to the country. Carole Rawcliffe presents a paper on medieval hospitals and leprosaria, most of which were suburban institutions on marginal land near towns. She illustrates the rationale for this spatial relationship with examples drawn largely from eastern England.

Die Sozialstruktur und Sozialtopographie vor-industrieller Städte: Beiträge eines Workshops am Institut für Geschichte der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg am 27. Und 28. Januar 2000

edited by *Matthias Meinhardt and Andreas Ranft*, Akademie Verlag, Berlin, Germany, 2005, 321 pp. ISBN 3-05-003836-5. This

conference volume contributes to the growing body of detailed reconstructions of the 'social topography' of pre-industrial towns in northern Germany, most of it by professional historians. Eleven substantive papers are included, five on research into social structure and groups, and six devoted to community structure in urban space. Four in the latter group are of particular interest to urban morphologists. Helge Steenweg traces patterns of property ownership at the parcel level in fourteenth century Göttingen, based on a 1334 tax list and a 'mapping of cellars', to interpret residential dynamics and mobility. Karsten Igel maps the occupational/status patterns and building types of Greifswald in 1400, demonstrating a broad correlation between stone houses and high status. Monika Lücke finds the 'market quarter' in Wittenberg in the sixteenth century acted as a boundary separating the different town neighbourhoods. An outstanding contribution is the 65-page study by Rolf Hammel-Kiesow, 'The formation of the socio-spatial pattern of the medieval city of Lübeck: plots, buildings and social structure' (title translated). This is a synthesis to date of substantial archaeological, cartographic, and archival evidence of property evolution within the medieval town from 1170 to the seventeenth century. It presents numerous meticulous reconstructions of the evolution of plot patterns through urban expansion and property subdivision, and the transformation of building types (especially the change in predominance from eaves- to gable-fronted houses on major streets).

The European city and green space: London, Stockholm, Helsinki and St. Petersburg, 1850–2000 edited by *Peter Clark*, Ashgate Publishing, Aldershot, UK, 2006, 318 pp. ISBN 0-7546-5429-X. This collection of sixteen studies reports on a four-year project to examine the development patterns of open space in four large European cities. The collaborative team comprises historians, some geographers, and an art historian, and takes a broad view of open space. Much of the analysis stresses issues in social history, politics, ideology, and planning policies, especially a concern for the 'publics' for whom parks have been intended, and the role of open space in urban sustainability. While all chapters consider themes with morphological implications,

the one by Peter Clark and Marjatta Hietala makes most use of mapped land-use evidence.

Die Stadt in der Spätantike – Niedergang oder Wandel? Edited by *Jens-Uwe Krause and Christian Witschel*, Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart, Germany, 2006, 492 pp. ISBN 10-3-515-08810-5. This collection of sixteen papers from a 2003 conference in Munich presents the newest interdisciplinary interpretations of the long-standing question whether European cities and city life in late classical times declined or simply mutated into new forms. The papers, in English (7), German (4), French (3), and Italian (2), examine towns in the western Roman Empire, towns in the eastern empire, and elites and institutions in general. Those most morphologically oriented are by Federico Marazzi (on Italian cities, with special focus on Capua, Canosa, Aquileia, Milan, Ravenna, and Rome), Jean Guyon (on the towns of Gaul), Michael Kulikowski (Spain), and Werner Tietz (Lycia, Anatolia). In a closing essay, J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz argues that decline and transformation are not mutually exclusive concepts, that change inevitably involves decline, and that no longer is the 'decline' of the classical world conceived as an unmitigated disaster.

Urban centers of Pondicherry by *S. Chandni Bi*, Icon Publications, New Delhi, India, 2006, 216 pp. ISBN 81-88086-25-8. This book traces urban evolution in the small South Indian hinterland of Pondicherry (on the Bay of Bengal, 150 km south of Madras) from earliest times to the present, with significant attention to spatial layout and major edifices. Drawing on evidence from excavation reports, ruined structures, inscriptions, and modern archival material, the study focuses on representative settlements for the different periods: Arikamedu (pre-Pallavan period), Bahur (Pallava-Chola period), Tribhuvani (Chola period), Villianure (Vijayanagar period), and Pondicherry (French regime). The author, a lecturer in history at Aligarh Muslim University, presents her study as the first to link together the long and varied urban history of this particular region.