

Announcement of the award of the third ISUF Postgraduate Bursary for evaluating the use of urban morphology in practice

1. Applicant: Nicola Scardigno

Nicola Scardigno graduated from Politecnico di Bari, Faculty of Architecture, in July in 2010 (5 years single-cycle) with a thesis focused on typo-morphological characteristics of Indian cities and architecture. During his university career, he spent one year in Istanbul (Istanbul Technical University) developing a research on Istanbul's urban morphology and architecture, and contributing to the upgrading of IRCICA's web site (Research Center For Islamic History, Art and Culture in Istanbul) focusing on Jerusalem's urban fabric.

In January 2011 he participated in the competition for the "Regeneration of Place Lalla Yeddouna" in Fez, Morocco. The project aimed to re-define commercial, residential and tourism structures, based on a preliminary morphological analysis of Fez's urban fabric which investigated the dialectic relation between the Medina's urban components. In September 2013 he concluded a two year MA in Sustainable Architecture & Urbanism validated by the University of Wales. During the first year Nicola attended masterclasses at the Prince's Foundation in London with studies investigating the relation between urban morphology and sustainability. followed by a one year placement in the Porphyrios Associates, London. His MA dissertation was an analysis of the typo-morphological characteristics of the Valle d'Itria in Puglia

2. Supervisor: Prof. Marco Maretto

Marco Maretto is professor of *Architecture and Urban Design* at the University of Parma (Italy). Council member of ISUF since 2010 his research focuses on the interpretation of urban form as a basis for urban design with special attention to "water cities" in Europe and Far East and to "sustainable urban design" in its cultural, social and economic contexts. Published works include: *Saverio Muratori: a Legacy in Urban Design*, *Ecocities: IL progetto urbano tra morfologia e sostenibilità*, *IL Paesaggio delle differenze*. A founder and director of RAM (Research in Architecture and urban Morphology) he is co-Editor of the international architectural reviews *L'industria delle costruzioni* and *U+D urbanform and design*. With a PhD in *Architectural Design*, University of Genoa he holds a Masters from the University of Rome "La Sapienza."

3. The Project: revitalization within Ahmedabad's informal walled city

The research will focus on the Project of Revitalization of Ahmedabad's informal walled city. This project was developed by the Ahmedabad Heritage Centre (AHC) which was established in 2001 through collaboration between the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC), the Housing & Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) and the Government of the Republic of France. With the aim of upgrading and optimizing traditional structures in order to re-create quality habitats in the low-rise and high-density walled city's urban life, the Indo-French project was developed on three scales: the town, the *pol* units (urban aggregates) and the architecture. The project provided:

- Documentation, design, technical assistance and site supervision services;
- Conservation and adaptive enrichment of urban heritage;
- Reintegration of traditional building crafts in contemporary construction and the propagation of traditional techniques;
- Urban spatial adaptation and provision of amenities corresponding to a contemporary way of life;

- Emphasis on the inclusion of heritage conservation as an integral component of planning schemes and development;
- Demonstrating the economic viability of restoration against the more expensive processes of demolition and reconstruction.

4.The research methodology

This study will investigate how morphological research has interpreted the dialectic relationship between physical (homes, special buildings, public spaces, routes) and social/cultural/economic components within Ahmedabad's informal fabric. By analyzing maps, drawings and written documents, this study will investigate the regeneration project of the neighbourhood called *Aka-Sheth-Kuwa-ni-Pol*¹: what has been preserved, re-placed, demolished and restored in this neighbourhood, in order to revitalize social, commercial and housing activities. Based on this analysis, the research will critically evaluate ways in which the tools of urban morphology have oriented sustainable strategies of intervention, both at urban and architectural scales, within the *Aka-Sheth-Kuwa-ni-Pol*.

A detailed final report will be produced for presentation at the Oporto Conference in July 2014.

¹ The Pol represents a domestic "socio-building dimension" typical of Indian urban fabrics. Being configured as an "urban aggregate" which synthesizes the social, functional and economic aspects of the "basic unit" of the Indian urban community, it plays the role of "urban mediator" between the entire urban organism and the Indian house typology.

References

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Caniggia, G., Maffei, G.L., 2001. *Architectural composition and building typology. Interpreting basic building*. Firenze: Alinea

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