

consideration paves the way for their discussion of the current morphological context in China. Chapter 3 introduces the disciplinary and geographical origins and key precepts of typomorphology. The concise, clear writing makes core concepts easily understandable especially for readers from China, who have little knowledge of typomorphology and have had little exposure to the work of British geographers and Italian architects. A new typomorphological framework is proposed that is adapted to the Chinese context (Chapter 4). Building on the work of authors such as Kang Qi and Jin Wu, the framework is based on seven morphological elements: general plan, silhouettes, streets and street networks, urban blocks and plots, public spaces, public buildings and houses (p. 66). The seven elements are not new to Chinese scholars; especially to those architectural urban morphologists whose research has been influenced by Kang Qi's significant paper on 'The urban forms' (Qi, 1982). Because all seven elements had been transformed during the 30-year period of rapid urbanization in China, though at different rates, they form the main concerns for urban spatial regulation and urban design. In this case, these elements were integrated into a systematic approach, which not only meets the requirements of typomorphology with respect to the scale and interconnection of the elements, but also fosters the notion that cultural identity is embodied in urban form. The authors assimilate the seven elements in the notion of type. They stress that typomorphology analyses and operates in a hierarchical system of scales (p. 59). They contend that the relationship between the elements is as important as the elements themselves (p. 66).

A case study in Nanjing, based on the authors' form-analysis framework, interprets the typological process of the seven elements (Chapter 5). This aspect of their work undoubtedly helps readers to deepen their understanding of the use of a typomorphological approach in a Chinese context. Nanjing is a historically and culturally important city in China. Its built environment had been studied from different perspectives in the past. The approach of Chen and Thwaites is distinguished by its methods and in particular the attention paid to matters of scale and historical continuity.

Far from stopping at the analysis and interpretation of urban form, an urban design approach is proposed based on typomorphology, using Nanjing again as its field of inquiry (Chapter 6). The authors display a deeper understanding of Chinese cities and the conditions of their

management and planning than most Western scholars interested in these questions. Their familiarity with Nanjing serves them well in their attempt at developing an operational urban design framework inspired by Saverio Muratori's 'operative history' theory and methodology. They develop 28 design guidelines associated with the seven elements of their framework. By highlighting how all the elements are interconnected, while illustrating how 'priority could be given to certain elements depending on the scale of the development that designers are dealing with' (p. 195), Chen and Thwaites illustrate how an approach inspired by typomorphology could be easily integrated into the current system of urban planning and design in China. The final chapter highlights the spatial relationship between typomorphology, cultural identity and social cohesion.

In a context where Chinese city development driven by intense political and economic forces in which matters of continuity and cultural identity have been overlooked, typomorphology-based design guidance appears timely. Such an approach to urban design might convince planning officials and designers of the necessity to consider continuity when addressing expectations for the future that require flexibility in regulations, creativity and inclusiveness.

Reference

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Urbanismo na composição de Portugal by *Luísa Trindade*, Coimbra University Press, Coimbra, Portugal, 2013, 713 pp. ISBN 978-989-26-0535-7.

The systematic operations of planning and construction of new towns in late-medieval Europe has attracted the interest of researchers of the city and its form for a long time. By documenting the Portuguese experience, this book enriches European historiography of this topic. Its starting

point was the doctoral thesis of the author, and this publication attests to the high quality of the research.

Portugal defined its boundaries in 1249 with the conquest of the city of Faro in the southern limit of the country. The king immediately initiated a political restructuring of the organization of the urban realm, with operations in existing cities and the creation of a network of new cities. In a process that parallels the development of the better-known *bastides* of south-western France or the cities founded in eastern Germany, the territory of the Iberian peninsula was subject to a resettlement and reorganization policy as the Christian kingdoms were defined and their borders to the south extended at the expense of the retreating Muslim kingdoms. That policy's most intensive period spanned from 1250 to 1325.

Luísa Trindade's work situates the development process of Portuguese cities within the broader context of the foundation practice and culture of European cities. It retraces a movement that sought to control territory through the foundation of urban settlements in different parts of the continent based on defined models. With an impressive review of research conducted in recent decades, the study sets about charting the development of planned cities in different geographical and cultural areas, highlighting both the similarities in the intentions of agents and the specificities of their local expressions. Stress is placed on the peculiarities of the Iberian Peninsula at a time when its cities were often comprised of three distinct communities and their juxtaposed spaces: a dominant Christian space, accompanied by a Muslim space and a Jewish space.

The study then focuses on 22 cities of varied size, level of documentation and mode of foundation. Avoiding exceptional and ostentatious cases, there is a rigorous and thorough treatment. The possibility to compare a large number of cases compensates for limitations in documentation. The nature of the body of information and the method used, allowed recognition of commonalities and particularities of planning and building processes. Excellent use is made of documents traditionally used in historiography, including royal charters of foundation and the first municipal laws, but also cartographic, iconographic and archaeological information. However, the approach had to be adapted in the absence of drawn plans (a source that would only flourish at a later historical period). The procedure entailed recovering the 'configuration matrix' of each city by means of analogical

reconstruction. Thus, starting from the current state of each city, the author proceeded deductively to reconstruct the matrix based on the recognition in particular of repeated occurrences, with particular emphasis on the plot pattern. Methodologically, the procedure unequivocally places the study in the field of urban morphology. It produces high-quality information and outstanding accuracy.

The book provides a well-defined urban model for the implementation of these new cities. Though simple, it is adaptable to the varied circumstances of Portugal. It accounts for the different components of the urban fabric and the different entities responsible for their development. Morphologically, these new cities comprise three main elements: the wall and castle; the layout matrix, including streets and plots; and the church, curiously detached from the latter matrix. In fact, the distinguishing feature of the new cities of the kingdom is the spatial separation of its three constitutive elements. For instance, a circular fortification wall could surround a stand-alone orthogonal tissue system, whereas the church might be positioned in between, but disconnected from both grid and wall. The buildings and spaces that would come to characterize the Portuguese city and become indispensable at the end of the Middle Ages, namely the municipal building and its associated square, were absent. The author develops a typological framework that arranges the spatial objects in various categories: from the linear model, consisting of a single street with the church at the end; to the herringbone orthogonal types of layout.

Rich in cartographic and iconographic illustrations, the book is notable for its explanatory diagrams illustrating the deductive and modelling work. By using aerial photographs and contemporary cartographic representations, patterns and repetitive elements are graphically highlighted. This enables the reader to follow the author's argument.

The publication of this work fills a gap in knowledge of the evolution of the Portuguese city, by addressing the production of new cities in the crucial period during which the borders of the new country stabilized. However, the importance of the study transcends elucidation of the medieval town, as it sheds light on an idea and procedures that mark the transition from the Middle Ages to modern times and underpinned the advent of the Portuguese city model. This was a model that was exported overseas from the mid-fifteenth century onward, first in the Atlantic islands and then in the

colonial territories that stretched from Brazil to Asia.

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On architecture. Melvin Charney: a critical anthology edited by *Louis Martin*, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montréal, Canada, 2013, 483 pp. ISBN 9780773541825.

As one of the founders of the so-called 'Montreal school of urban architecture', Melvin Charney made an original contribution to contemporary architecture and urban planning in Quebec. He was not only an architect but also a thinker and architectural critic, a committed artist and a pedagogue, who sparked an authentic Montreal school of thought while following a path all his own. Louis Martin has meticulously compiled the work of Charney that has appeared in an array of architectural journals published in Canada (*Canadian Architect*, *Architecture Canada*), the USA (*Progressive Architecture*, *Yale Architectural Journal*) and Europe (*Architectural Design*, *Deutsche Bauzeitung*). In his introductory essay to the book, George Baird emphasizes the contribution that Charney's thought and teaching made to the protection of Montreal's urban fabric as well as the appeal of his innovative approach to planning and urban design in the development of Montreal. His approach was reflected in the restructuring of Montreal's urban fabric over the years in a way similar to the influence that the Reconstruction of the European City School, led by Bohigas, had on the city of Barcelona. It can be said that, together with professors Alfred Neumann, and Pierre Larochelle (the translator into French of Caniggia and Maffei's *Composizione architettonica e tipologia edilizia. Lettura dell'edilizia di base*) (Larochelle, 2011), Charney is one of the founding fathers of the morphological approach in Quebec. However, his work had an impact at an applied level (for the practice of urban architecture and design), rather than at a theoretical level in urban morphological research.

Martin structured his anthology in four parts, corresponding to phases that he sees in Charney's

intellectual development. Each part is introduced by a critical contextualization, outlining continuities as well as reconsiderations and even contradictions in Charney's thought. The articles grouped under the initial phase stretching from 1962 to 1966, entitled 'Beginnings', retrace the premises for the construction of Charney's original thoughts. Like Le Corbusier in his youth, and upon the suggestion of Louis Khan, with whom he studied at Yale, Charney took up a quest to uncover the origins of Mediterranean architecture. At the same time, he became interested in Pop Art's aestheticization of everyday objects symbolizing North American consumerist culture. As highlighted by Martin, this foray into the world of contemporary art was reflected in his later work, in particular his obsession with deciphering the underlying meaning and cultural manifestations of popular architecture and his ability to have a lucid perspective on everyday banal forms of vernacular architecture.

For the purpose of illustrating the second phase, covering the period from 1966 to 1969 and dubbed 'Beyond architecture', Martin chose articles that testify to Charney's active involvement in major international debates on modernity and architecture. Martin points out the very optimistic tone of Charney's writings, defending the liberating power of technology in a context in which the modernist doctrine of Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne was losing steam. In his article 'Grain elevators revisited', however, Charney sets about criticizing Le Corbusier's discourse and his manifesto book, *Vers une architecture*, and finally returns to his own territory of predilection, Montreal. The observation of forms bequeathed by industrial architecture, such as Montreal's grain elevators, is what gave him the theoretical basis for formulating a critique of the formalism of early modern architects. Charney was more concerned with the process and liberating potential released by new technologies than he was with machine aesthetics.

In the third part of the book, 'Other monuments', the period from 1971 to 1976 is presented by Martin as a defining moment and the culmination of Charney's intellectual journey with the attainment of maturity. In his critical introduction to this part, Martin asserts that the postmodernist school of thought and Rossi's work on city architecture, as well as Venturi's on the American strip among others, encouraged Charney to return to the rigorous observation of vernacular architecture that he had developed at the outset of his career. In an