

Trade [Centre] was made for vast exhibitions and marketplaces, but, at a more visceral level, the complex was itself the exhibit. Claiming the Middle East's first skyscraper allowed Dubai to appear exceptional, beyond the basic improvements sought in past decades" (270).

Architectural representation in the book is understood as a tool by those who seek to be powerful to achieve permanence and stability through its appearance, and Reisz in turn is alert to similar practices in the archive. He deploys much skill in his engagement with his mainly anglophone archives: bringing to the center details, such as the question of labor or the role of non-Western experts, who are otherwise pushed to the margins. In the opening chapters, for instance, Reisz notes that due to the British political agents' past experience in Sudan, it became the "regional blueprint" for organizing Dubai's new municipality and from where experts were recruited. Thus, while Reisz does focus on British experts, officials, and companies in the shaping of Dubai, he emphasizes the importance of Dubai municipal experts who came from Sudan (like Kamal Hamza) and Dubai's first paid consultant, the Iraqi Abdul Salam Er Raouf, who did notable work in setting up Dubai's municipality. Reisz is all too aware that cheap labor was central to the very "rise" of Dubai as a notable trading hub and expertly details the many ways this workforce arrived including their technical skills. In the case of the Dubai World Trade Centre, Reisz details how the mostly Pakistani builders maintained a high-quality concrete finish to maintain the tower's natural concrete color (384).

Reisz is hindered in his evident inability to engage Arabic language sources independently. The greater impediment remains, however, that the UAE is more welcoming to showpiece university campuses than serious scholarship, and the palpable fear expressed by potential interviewees. There is no publicly accessible archive in Dubai. Reisz states that many who agreed to talk about the history of Dubai did so either nostalgically or "do not want to say anything possibly construed as negative" (15). The absence of a depth of knowledge on Dubai's internal social and political dynamics makes its mark on *Showpiece City*. Calling for much needed further research, Reisz writes: "Focused on the histories of foreign expertise, this book provides minimal elucidation on a significant aspect of Dubai's urban development, namely the wealthy merchants whose family business presided over Dubai's port since as early as the nineteenth century" (17). The fascinating characters who existed within Shaykh Rashid's inner circle, like Mahdi Al Tajir (also now popularly known as the "richest man in Scotland"), and other wealthy merchants' role in Dubai's formation remain largely invisible.

Showpiece City is an impressive achievement and contribution to the rapidly growing sub-field of Middle East urban studies. This book will be of interest not only to those who study the history of Dubai or urban and architectural historians of the region but also to those engaged in political economic history of the Middle East and the dynamic role between experts, rulers, empires, and corporations. This is a ground-breaking book that provides original insight into the minutia of Dubai in the 1950s to the 1970s while simultaneously contributing to larger debates on the urban history of power and space.

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New Islamic Urbanism: The Architecture of Public and Private Space in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Stefan Maneval (London: UCL Press, 2019). Pp. 242. £45.00 cloth, £25.00 paper. ISBN: 9781787356443

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The relationship between Islam and the built environment has gained a renewed attention in the last two decades. While "Islamic architecture" and "Islamic city" had been topics of scholarly inquiry for a long time, the critique of Orientalism following the ground-breaking work of Edward Said led to the questioning of these terms and their frames of reference. Nevertheless, the current global interest has to do with

the increasing political role of Islam since the 1990s and especially after 9/11. The most significant reflection of this attention in the scholarship is the emphasis on the *politics* of the relationship between Islam and the built environment. Stefan Maneval's *New Islamic Urbanism* is a fine contribution to this line of research. However, it would be unfair to see the book as a contribution only to debates on Islam and the built environment. It represents an ambitious undertaking, which also expands our understanding of public and private spheres and their spatiality as well as the role of architecture in shaping the social realm. For this inquiry, the author digs into the patterns and spaces of everyday life within a complex social formation embodying layers of segregation. In addition to fieldwork conducted in Jeddah, the author analyzes a multilingual set of sources including postcards, photographs, and memoirs.

In his lucid Introduction, Maneval defines the two assumptions he would like to challenge: that public (life) only takes place in what is conceived as public space, and that gender segregation only effects women negatively and men positively. Against these assumptions, he shows the complicated mechanisms of both public/private realms and gender segregation. In fact, these two problematics allow the author to scrutinize each theme further. Maneval argues that “[public and private] spheres should be regarded as intertwined, because our notions of privacy determine the way we construct public spaces, and our perception of the public realm shapes the architecture of private space” (2). As for gender segregation, he argues that it “serves to constrain the movements of not only women but also of men [and] [a]t the same time, gender segregation provides opportunities for some men and some women” (5). One of the most interesting (and successful) aspects of the book is its use of architecture in the analysis of the spatial making of the interplay between public/private realms and gender segregation. Maneval deploys what he calls “architectural sociology,” which in the study emerges as an analytical tool used with a striking attention to the details of the built form.

The Introduction is followed by a chapter on the history of Jeddah throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This brief history presents the transformation of the city from a small port town serving as the arrival point of merchants and pilgrims heading to Mecca to today's Jeddah stretching across 1,750 square kilometers (an area twice the size of Berlin) with a population of four million. The rest of the book follows a chronological account: Chapter 2 presents the traditional urban environment of Jeddah in the first half of the twentieth century; Chapter 3 tackles the postwar transformations triggered by the oil economy; Chapters 4 and 5 deal with the period from the 1970s to the twenty-first century with respect to architectural discourse and practice, respectively; and, finally, Chapter 6 scrutinizes the contemporary city.

Despite its chronological structure, the book is by no means a descriptive narrative of successive periods. Chapter 2, for instance, does not only provide the reader with an account of the spaces of (Islamic) everyday life in Jeddah. Additionally, it serves as a key chapter in two respects. First, the chapter introduces elements of traditional architecture that had been operational in giving form to the everyday life deeply influenced by Islam. It analyzes the forming of public and private realms as well as the spatial construction of gender segregation through architectural elements such as *dihliz* (entrance/reception hall), *maq'ad* (domestic office of the patriarch), *majlis* (living room), *mirkāz* (exterior gathering space of men), and *rushan* (bay window fulfilling both ventilation requirements and ordering visibility as well as sound). This attentiveness to architecture allows the author to grasp the specificities of everyday life in an Islamic society. Second, Maneval interrupts his narrative midway through the chapter to extract theoretical reflections that will be operational in the following chapters. Here, he both rejects giving up the concepts of public and private as irrelevant to an Islamic society and problematizes their conception as fixed domains that emerge (almost automatically) in predefined spaces (inside/outside; home/market-place). He discusses the changing modes of privacy in Muslim societies throughout centuries and links this discussion to the fluidity of the boundaries in and of the house. Next, he scrutinizes the notion of public(ness) and proposes to differentiate between “strong” and “weak” publics (“counterpublics”) (77–81). This distinction allows him to open room for the publics constructed by women, albeit in private spaces (of home) and within asymmetrical power relations.

Chapter 3 focuses on the changes brought by the transformations of the postwar oil era and their particular effects on public and private spheres. While the traditional house allowed for fluid and at times ambiguous spatialities for public and private uses of men and women, the new domestic architecture of the postwar era presented a clear division between inside and outside. This resulted in *spatial differentiation*, that is, home losing its public functions, along with *spatial polarization*, that is, privacy being

increasingly associated with the home as a female space. A crucial point here is that the removal of male publics from the domestic interior made it possible for female publics to flourish inside the house.

The social predicaments of the new spatial forms brought by the oil economy are discussed in the following two chapters, through the responses they received. Chapter 4 traces the parallel emergence and later convergence of two lines of criticism toward the new urban life in the Saudi society. The first of these emerged from within the field of architecture. Similar to the critiques of modern(ist) architecture and urbanism elsewhere, the new urban condition was criticized on grounds of weakening social ties and loss of privacy. In the Saudi context, the critique of modernism was conceived as that of “Westernisation.” These criticisms soon assumed religious content with the simultaneous rise of the so-called “Islamic revival” that became increasingly influential in Saudi Arabia. Since the architectural critique had parallels with the late twentieth century trend of “New Urbanism,” Maneval defines the combination of architectural criticism and Islamic rhetoric as “New Islamic Urbanism” (NIU), hence the title of the book. In Chapter 5, he analyzes NIU in practice. Looking at the residential architectures of different social groups (Saudis and immigrants who belong to different classes) living in different types of residential environments (single- and multi-family houses; old buildings and gated communities), the chapter investigates the common features of these buildings. Curiously, the increasing enforcement of enclosure in the new houses for the sake of privacy resulted in decreasing social control over the interiors: “[T]he walls and screens of residential homes offer a refuge for otherwise forbidden practices, heterogeneous identities and divergent worldviews, as well as platforms of exchange for dissident political opinions—in other words, these homes offer a refuge for publics and counterpublics” (165). That is, seeking further conservatism, it was New Islamic Urbanism that enabled cultural enclaves in the urban environment.

Chapter 6 follows the discussions of the previous chapter by zooming out to analyze the urban whole. While at first sight Jeddah is characterized by the lack of public spaces of assembly, the open spaces cannot avoid being appropriated by informal (mis)uses. Moreover, the public/private distinctions also continue to blur within the city, which allows for minimal pedestrian use (due to both the car-dominated planning and the climate conditions). Interestingly, Maneval argues that preference to use private cars is not only related to climate; it is also very much related to the “secluded mobility of the car” that functions as “a private living room on wheels” (181). The car provides a domestic sphere in the public domain, which within the context of NIU serves as a bubble of privacy. The chapter continues with a discussion on the complexity of gender segregation within the public spaces of the city. Through his fieldwork and interviews, Maneval observes that the duplication of spaces (separately for men and women) opens room for women to participate in public life. Along the same vein, he sets to explore how segregated spaces enable weak/counterpublics. The logic of domestic spaces turning into cultural enclaves extends into public spaces through the architectural typologies of shopping malls, gated communities, and beach resorts: “the private setting of secluded and privately owned facilities enables encounters between strangers, and thereby the constitution of publics” (211).

New Islamic Urbanism convincingly demonstrates that public and private spheres are not strictly divided but “entangled, mutually determining and situational” (219); and architecture is an important means of defining boundaries between them. Throughout the book, it is fascinating to see how social class further complicates the relationship between the making of public and private spheres and gender segregation. While the author is attentive to the role of class, the book does not contain a discussion on such observations. A second criticism concerns the title of the book. The reader comes across the term “New Islamic Urbanism” only on page 134. Only then, she understands that the term refers to a specific trend that has emerged at a specific historical context. That is, there is a misfit between the text and its title: if the book is on NIU as a specific phenomenon, the first half of the book becomes a (perhaps too long) introduction to this phenomenon. Additionally, the Introduction should highlight NIU as the central theme of the book (symptomatically, the Preface refers to NIU as if to compensate for its lack in the Introduction). Aside from these two criticisms, *New Islamic Urbanism* is a welcome addition to the growing literature on the politics of the relationship between Islam and the built environment. With its accessible style, this rich book will be of interest to an interdisciplinary audience including both scholars and students.