

شخصية العمران وعبقورية المكان

Urban Personality

The term "*Urban Personality*" was first derived in my Ph.D. thesis in 1988- published in 1992 (The Evolution of Urban Personality of the Contemporary Arab City) to trace and explain the multidimensionality of the hidden dimensions that create the uniqueness, sense and genius of certain urban environments and places. In fact I was inspired by many contemporary literatures in the fields of Environmental and Cognitive psychology, Personality Traits, Brain Science, Creativity and Thinking Methods, Architectural Character and Style, Anthropology, Cultural Sociology, and many other sciences and topics. The real and authentic inspiration descended to me from the works of Carl Jung, Roger Sperry, Ned Herrmann, Edward Hall, Amos Rapoport, Patrick Geddes, Lewis Mumford, Christopher Alexander, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Kevin Lynch. In addition to the Arabic works of Erfan Samy in his distinct text book "The Theory of Organic Architecture" and Gamal Hemdan in his greatest encyclopedic book the "Personality of Egypt and Genius of Loci".

Though the term "*Urban Personality*" looks unfamiliar to most urban and architectural expertise, the concept and its interpretations are usually used in different ways and forms. Actually the most common and frequently used terms in this aspect are "*Urban Character, Urbanity, and Place Identity*".* This newly established web part is intended to be a lecturing ground for those interested students and researchers in "*The Theory of Urban Personality*" and those who seek the real truth about our urban and architectural essences. Although this web part by its philosophic nature and purpose would be in Arabic language, I wish it will be very attractive, interactive, sustainable and panoramic tool to investigate and infer the essence behind what planners, designers, and architects are trying to create, inspire, or even fetching for!

* **Urbanity** refers to the characteristics, Personality traits, and viewpoints associated with cities and urban areas. People who can be described as having urbanity are also referred to as **citified**. The word is related to the Latin "*Urbanitas*" with connotations of refinement and elegance, the opposite of "*Rusticus*", associated with the countryside. In Latin the word referred originally to the view of the world from ancient Rome. *Urbane* has a similar meaning; as Oxford Dictionary notes the relationship of *urbane* to *urban* is similar to the relationship *humane* bears to *human*. In language, **urbanity** still connotes a smooth and literate style, free of Barbarisms and other infelicities. In antiquity, schools of rhetoric flourished only in the atmosphere of large cities, to which privileged students flocked from smaller cities in order to gain polish, 'Urbanity' as a word has also been used in recent years to describe the 'insanity' of urban life, as in the novel *Urbanity* by Francis Murphy, see Wikipedia.

* **Place Identity** refers to a cluster of ideas about places in the fields of geography, urban planning, urban design, landscape architecture, and environmental psychology. It concerns the meaning and significance of places for their inhabitants and users. Methodologies for understanding place identity primarily involve qualitative techniques, such as interviewing, participant observation, discourse and mapping a range of physical elements. Some urban planners, urban designers and landscape architects use forms of deliberative planning, design charettes and participatory design with local communities as a way of working with place identity to transform existing places as well as create new ones. This kind of planning and design process is sometimes referred to as place-making or **Urban Character**. Place identity has become a significant issue in the last 25 years in urban planning and design. Related to the world-wide movement to protect places with heritage significance, concerns have arisen about the loss of individuality and distinctiveness between different places as an effect of cultural globalization, see Wikipedia.