

Cities and Urban Spaces / Urban Planning and the Instruments of Planning

As city planning involves the provision of public and private spaces for the city's inhabitants, thus changes in society and lifestyle naturally alter the texture of urban environments and methods of planning. Architects use plans to shape their ideas and constructions, while maps are created to document, represent and provide orientation. The location, and the shape of public and private places in the urban texture, must necessarily therefore respond to several concerns: the local climate and environment, the materials available there, the needs of the community, the economy, and even military, and other symbolic representations of the society and its leaders. Modern urban planning was born in the 19th century and can be seen to have begun with the reshaping of Paris by Georges-Eugène Haussmann, who looked back to the architectural vocabulary of European Absolutist power in order to reflect the contemporary emerging hegemony of industry, trade, commerce and banking, and their trustees, the bourgeoisie. He created the new Paris on a grid pattern, with wide, open, axial boulevards, streets and squares, which were lined with majestic-looking public and private buildings. The new city plan, characterised by impressive public buildings and separate residential areas, reflected the constantly moving rhythm of life in the service of commerce and consumerism. Haussmann's work represents a turning point in European town planning and was also extremely influential in Arab and Ottoman city planning; however, city planning in Ottoman and Arab lands was also informed by the transmission of ideas of European architects and directives that came via Ottoman mediation.



Working Number: DE 011
Name: Outline map of Damascus in 1918
Holding Museum: Museum of Islamic Art at the Pergamon Museum, State Museums
Date: Map made in 2005
Materials: -
Curator Justification: -
The map depicts different sections of the city according to diverse social, cultural, economic, public and private purposes.



Working Number: LB 028
Name: Street map of Beirut
Holding Museum: Khalil Itani's Archive
Date: 1902
Materials: -
Curator Justification: A new map-form that depicts the trade and commerce facilities of Beirut.



Working Number: GR 023
Name: View of Smyrna
Holding Museum: Benaki Museum
Date: 1845
Materials: Engraving on paper
Curator Justification: A topographic view to show the commercial and cultural sites and districts of Smyrna.



Working Number: SP 054
Name: Project for a Garden or Park

Holding Museum: National Museum of Decorative Arts
Date: End of the 19th century
Materials: Paper; ink, watercolour
Curator Justification: The water supply system of course is fundamental to the city plan. Fountains are not only functional but have recreational and aesthetic appeal as well: the Neo-Mudéjar decoration of this fountain appeals to a commonly shared history and national identity.



Working Number: LB 023
Name: Beirut Port during its expansion
Holding Museum: Khalil Itani's Archive
Date: 1892
Materials: -
Curator Justification: This view of the Port documents work in progress.



Working Number: TR2 111
Name: The Ottoman Bank
Holding Museum: Istanbul University, Nadir Eserler Kütüphanesi (Rare Books Library)
Date: 1856
Materials: Photograph
Curator Justification: Both the position and the architectural features of the Bank are designed to represent the power and stability of the Ottoman Empire.



Working Number: LB 034
Name: Map of Beirut port
Holding Museum: Khalil Itani's Archive
Date: 1890
Materials: -
Curator Justification: A map to document the structure and system of the Port of Beirut after expansion.



Working Number: ET1 012
Name: The Egyptian Stock Market
Holding Museum: Bibliotheca Alexandrina
Date: Unknown
Materials: -
Curator Justification: The location, height and architectural features of the Bourse ensured the building's landmark status in modern Alexandria. The impact of European architecture is clear, but it seems appropriate to the building's function as well.



Working Number: PT 014
Name: Rossio Railway Station
Holding Museum: -
Date: 1886–1890
Materials: -
Curator Justification: While the Neo-Manueline style in Portugal reminded the Portuguese people of their Manueline past it also reflected the contemporary vogue for Romantic architecture.



Working Number: MO 014
Name: Bab Boujloud
Holding Museum: -
Date: 1913
Materials: -
Curator Justification: The city gate serves a functional and aesthetic purpose, but it has a symbolic meaning as well, as a confine between rural and urban life and culture.



Working Number: DE 018
Name: Monument commemorating the installation of the Hijaz-Damascus telegraph connection, Beirut
Holding Museum: Museum of Islamic Art at the Pergamon Museum, State Museums
Date: 1910
Materials: -
Curator Justification: -
The monument is a prominent landmark, symbolising the municipal administration and also embodying a strong political message. The bronze column, erected at the centre of Merje Square, was designed to represent the power and greatness of the Ottoman Empire.
