

THE ABSENCE OF CULTURAL DISTRICT AT BEIRUT WITH A COMPARISON OF THE CULTURAL DISTRICT IN THE HISTORICAL CITY OF TRIPOLI

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Abstract

Beirut: Restoration is growing fast, and down town Beirut under the influence of Solidere is changing from a devastated war zone to an enormous building site, on which some attempt is made to preserve the unique architectural heritage now disclosed.

It has been said, that “local beauty passes without attention; because it is a part of us, and we share our days on earth with it. But it must be seen and appreciated now before time and negligence should achieve its disappearance.” (R. Dussaud).

Today the elimination of Beirut from the country’s social life and business activity during the civil war of 1975-1990 seems catastrophic.

Beirut was the emporium of the Middle East and the almost unique shopping center of Lebanon. The city centre was divested and commerce was dispersed across the country.

The liquorice Seller has long given way to carbonated drinks but grandma’s toot is still very popular at home.

The water Pump: is no longer in the street but has been replaced by the ever present but much more noisy tanker pumping precious liquid up the roof of high-rise building.

The Karabige Seller: disappeared when the ever popular Arabic sweets went indoors into smart shops.

A great amount of the infrastructure has already been achieved. The master plan for restoration and conservation has been achieved.

Tripoli: The Trablos of today dates from the fall of the harbour city in 1289. The city site was transferred to the Abu Samra hill, and protected from the possibility of Crusader attack from Cyprus, by the rebuilt castle of Sanjil. Previous building which had developed around the crusader castle, were frequently used as the basis for new Mameluke constructions. Some forty such buildings still exist today as monuments, mostly from the 14th century. The religious and civil buildings of the mameluks are well preserved, of these the Mosques and Madrassas are the most important. The khans began as the motels of the 13th century. These caravanserais were the Hiltons of the Middle Ages, and have not been equalled until the advent of modern hotels. The old souks and the hamam.

Tripoli has a richness of medieval history greater than other town in Lebanon. In addition Tripoli has benefited greatly from good street planning in the downtown area extending

west to el Mina.

Beirut: The history of Lebanon demonstrates that Beirut (Downtown) the capital was the paradisiac of the Middle East. But the civil war of 1975-1990 seems catastrophic; Beirut was eliminated from the country’s social life and business activity inside a shop or the different souks which was divided between the type and the quality.

After 1993 the master plan for restoration and conservation has been achieved, in aim to protect the unique architectural heritage but we can remark that the social life is not the same like before the war, Beirut represent a place for pleasure and leisure; restaurants, offices, neglected ruins under the wickedness a poor master plan.

Tripoli: or Trablos of today which had developed around the crusader castle, were frequently used as the basis for new Mameluke constructions from the 14th century which still exist today as monuments, the religious and civil buildings of the mameluks are well preserved, of these the Mosques and Madrassas, old souks and the hamam are the most important. The Tripoli has a richness of medieval history represent a good model of the authentic and real relation between the city as monuments, art of work and the inhabitant.