Persisting vision: plans for a modern Arab capital, Amman, 1955-2002

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Abstract

This article examines the character and role of the main urban design and architectural proposals included in the various plans and masterplans made for the city of Amman, Jordan, in the period 1955-2002, gauges the degree and extent of their implementation and discusses the general factors influencing their implementation. It documents the time lag between the initial date of the proposal and the date of its final implementation which varies from a minimum of 10 years to a maximum of 47 years, thus often far exceeding the time horizon of the plan. Nevertheless, the survey has shown that the majority of these proposals have indeed been implemented, notwithstanding their slightly modified form or location, and that a good number of the spectacularly grand projects had been implemented (or are currently underway) since the 1990s, which coincides with formation of a new administrative and planning entity known as the Municipality of Greater Amman. This process of delayed but, eventually, rather assured implementation is here termed, 'persistence of vision'.