



Dubai Amplified: The Engineering of a Port Geography (Design and the Built Environment)

By Stephen J. Ramos



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Following the British withdrawal in 1971, the Gulf Region entered a heady period of political restructuring, awash with oil money that helped fund national aspirations. Infrastructure investment became a central part of the region's nation-building initiatives and fueled strong competition. Without its neighbours' oil fields, infrastructure and territorial development became particularly vital to Dubai. This book provides a unique and detailed understanding of Dubai urbanism by demonstrating that cumulative programmatic intensification and scalar amplification of its large-scale infrastructural components guided its metropolitan growth and generated a territorial organization logic that outstripped the predictive capacity of traditional Western master planning. Dubai's rapid series of infrastructural projects culminated in the Jebel Ali Port, Industrial Area, and Free Zone, which marked a definitive "before and after" point. The book shows how Jebel Ali also became the template for subsequent developments, Dubai World Holdings Company's international aspirations, and the agencies that manage and regulate Dubai's large-scale infrastructural projects today. Dubai Amplified highlights the cycle of typological borrowing, prototypical replication, and scalar amplification, specifically in Dubai's infrastructure projects, to best describe its general territorial development. While infrastructure is traditionally understood as the elemental "hardware" that undergirds urban development, the book concludes by arguing that the definition should be expanded in this case as more of a set of objects, networks, and services that cities can selectively borrow, replicate, and amplify.



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Editorial Review

Review

'A landmark study of one of the world's major port cities and centers of global finance. Combines wonderful historical depth with original analysis and a remarkable summing up of the major lessons to be learned from the hectic story of Dubai's explosive growth. Destined to become a standard work of reference and an inspiration for further research.' Roger Owen, Harvard University, USA 'The book challenges preconceptions about Dubai's development in at least two major ways. It reveals how the real estate ventures of local and international speculators have been guided and supported by major investment on the part of the government in infrastructure. It also shows that underlying the sensationalism of the new is a long history of thinking, strategizing, planning, and of trying and erring. Ramos makes a major contribution to the study of urban development in Dubai and the Gulf region and to the formulation of the new relationship between urbanization and transportation infrastructure in the late 20th and early 21st century.' Hashim Sarkis, Harvard University, USA '... the book presents a thorough account of the development of Dubai from a business and engineering standpoint... useful to academics, planning practitioners, and policy-makers interested in contemporary moments of urbanism and may help inform the discourse of burgeoning port (re)developments in China and other key global trade nodes.' Geographical Research '... probably the best book one may read on the city-state' The Middle East Journal

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