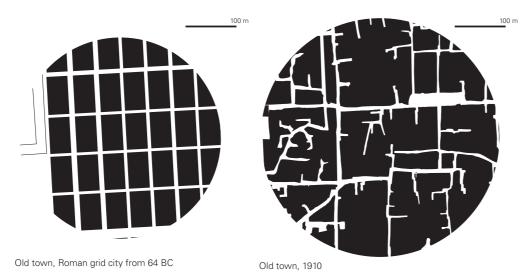


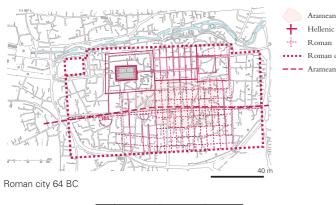
Early, Ancient and Islamic City of Damascus

TRANSFORMATION INTO AN "ISLAMIC CITY"

The organic "Islamic" city began in the weak Byzantine empire

The Greek and Roman city followed strong geometric patterns and straight lines. During the Byzantine empire the rigid Roman grid of Damascus started to break up. The Byzantine empire, weaker administratively, gave house owners and the church the freedom to expand their properties. Due to the weakness of the Byzantines Damascus was taken easily by the Islamic armies. With the introduction of Islam, the unregulated expanding of houses and mosques continued, as long is one didn't offend one's neighbors. The strong ritualized living patterns of Islam made formal institutions unnecessary, and so open places like the forum disappeared over time. Pack animals were preferred before wheeled chariots, so wide streets were not needed anymore. This transformation from the straight roman street grid with large open spaces into "Islamic" narrow street-cities happened slowly taking many centuries to form.



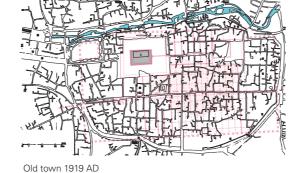


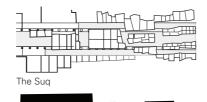
Roman Cardo

in Damascus area as early since the middle of the Assyrian

the fertile Ghouta oa- arranged around the NeoBaby-

as 5000 BC. Situated in second millennium BC,













Roman Empire 333 BC Alexander the Great 64 BC Under the Roman Empire the Capital of Per- conquered the Persians and Da- rectangular stone Roman wall with seven mascus is for the first time under gates is approximately the same size as "western rule". Small greek city the old walled city today. The Romans with straight street grid, agora expand the straight street grid wotj the and Zeus temple on the same Via Recta remaining today still. The



Aramean small city 572 BC

1000 BC

Assyrians



538 BC





ΑD

395 AD Byz-

Damascus under The Ottoman Empire

EXPANSION THROUGH RELIGION AND TRADE

Ottoman Damascus grew along the route to Mecca and developed straight street suburbs in late 20th century

Damascus became a major meeting-point for caravans and pilgrims on their holy Hajj to Mecca. As the Ottoman empire expanded so did the number of pilgrims, with between 25 000-60 000 people meeting in the Midan area twice a year. Also Damascus had become on of the big stops of caravan trade voyages, up to 2-3 caravans with 2000 camels from the far east stopped in Damascus every year before continuing west.

The Hajj-migration added over 30 % of the population and there was a fast expansion of suburbs. Damascus grew south along the route to Mecca and the old area of Maydan became fully incorporated into the city as a residential suburb. Settlements also arouse following the road up to Saliheye.

The last sixty years of the Ottoman Empire was a time of administrated reform and modernisation, influenced by Europe . The new urbanism, and this was before any french mandate master plan, that developed was based on 3 principles.



Midan, Damascus expanding south along the route to Mecca.

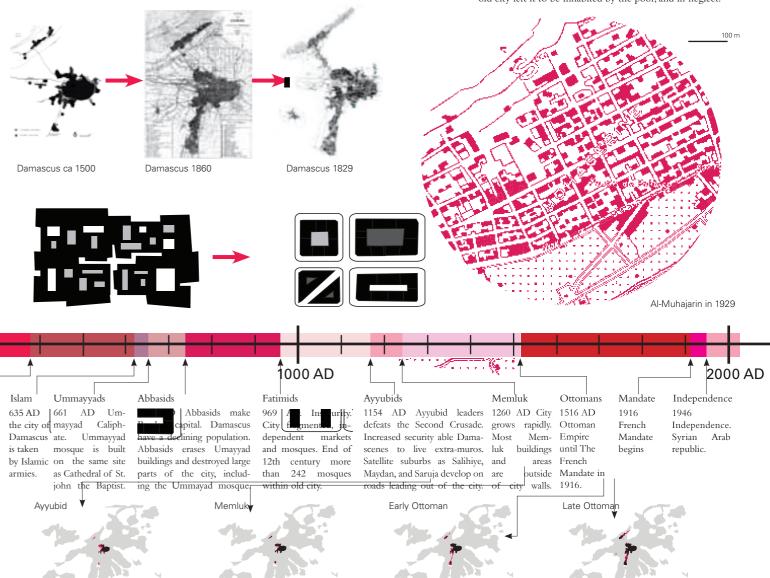
Late Ottoman urban planning principles

- . Widening of streets and roads
- 2. The design of new suburbs with geometric patterns.
- 3. Construct in stone instead of wood.

Al-Muhajarin master plan layout

Late Ottoman geometric master plan layout

Al-Muhajarin which was originally intended to accommodate refugees, was appropriated by the wealthier population as Damascus began to develop northward and the well-to-do began leaving the old city to modern suburbs. This exodus from the old city left it to be inhabited by the poor, and in neglect.



Evidence of habitation

The French Mandate and Independence

MASTER PLANS, SOCIALISM, IMMIGRATION AND THE NEGLECT OF OLD CITY

Abu Rummaneh area, developed during the

Population growth per annum 1981-2000

Damascus population increased a lot

from the 1950s and on. Much of the

increase is explained by Iraqi and Palestinian refugees. The population today

is officially 4,3 million, but that is in the

whole region of Rif Dimashq. A large

number of refugees are not counted in

The growth is mainly in the outer re-

gion of the Damascus and at least since 1980s the inner city has a decreasing

this number.

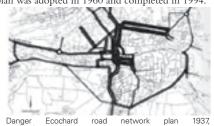
French Mandate period

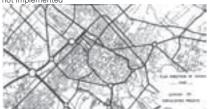
The French continued what the late Ottoman plannes began with masterplanning the city and the post-independence socialist state of Syria implemented the planning.

After the World War I the French Mandate continued the urban development which the Ottomans started in the 1900th century. The first master plan for Damascus, totally ignoring the local tradition and neglecting the old city, faced a lot of resistance from a city which had grown organically for a thousand years.

Danger and Ecochard presented a new road system, creating a ring road around the old town, to ease congestion but also to "show off" the cultural heritage of the old city. They also proposed a new sewage system for the city including the old town, but French Mandate and Independence planing mainly focused on building new modern housing outside of the old city.

They also proposed a functional zoning map. The plan was adopted in 1960 and completed in 1994.





Danger Ecochard Banshoya road network plan 1968, implanted by the socialist state and is still the only existing



1936 Zoning map of Danger/Ecchochard, adopted 1968 and finished 1994

1916, the Great Arab Revolution started 1925, the Great Syrian Re- 1946

bombed the capital, causing much was

In 1948, the State of Is- 1963 the Bath Socialrael was declared. Pal- ist Party took control over in Yarmouk (Muhayyin The Baath Party, now registered. suburb in Mezze is built.

The Baath Socialist

Party took power over

Svria in 1963. The sub-

urb Mezze was influ-

enced by contemporary

Soviet planning and architecture. The govern-

ment also implemented

the Danger Ecochard master plans with the

help of Japanese plan-

ner Banshoya.

Damascus Today

Refugee settlements, Suburbia and the World Heritage

leaves the old city account for onecus, and is also the main reason for the destruction of the Al-Ghouta. There are 13 illegal housing settlements. Jaramana, an area of Iraqi refugee area, being one of the largest . These areas provide services to the city as a whole, but is not shown in the formal economy. 30% of Damascus inhabitants live in these areas.

30 % of Damascenes live in illegal

ar is an apper middle class suburb northwest of Damasous. Wealthier population leaves old city for modern high standard housing he can, trend that started in the midth century. Dumar is one of these he old city has been left in municipar neglect for decades, but more and more restaurants and hotels are being built, and often the old Islamic and Ottoman houses are restored without proper restoration techniques.



Dumar, upper middle class suburb northwest of Damascus



Jaramana, an area where Iragi refugees settled southeast of Old Town

living old city and a site of World Heritage under threat

The World heritage site is situated within the old city walls, but the report from April 2008, written by the UNESCO and ICOMOS stresses the fact that the old city is only a part of a larger historic urban area, with the nearby suburbs Qanawat, Souk al Srija, Midan, Sarouja and Al Uquiba. They want the area with the nearby suburbs and the old is to be considered as a whole. UNESCO together with a uproar of Damascene inhabitants successfully stopped the planned expansion to a highway on the King Faisal road, a project that would have separated the old city from the historic suburbs and done much damage to Barada river. They also stopped the ongoing rough and unsupervised "restoration" of Straight Street.

A lot of hotels and restaurants are being built in the old city. The positive outcome is the maintenance of livelihood in the old city so that it "stays alive". The negative side is the gentrification process of rents going up, pushing out the poorer occupants.

The World Heritage List

890 properties forming part of the cultural and natural heritage which the World Heritage Committee considers as having outstanding universal value. Greek These include 689 cultural, 176 natural and 25 mixed properties in 148 States



Ecochard Upper class traffic plan Early Ottoman is fully implanted.

1979 An= City grows 2002 Iraqi cient City of Damascus is uncontrolled. settle in World Herilisted. tage

lans are made to build the King Foisal mad, as a ernment plans for way, just north of city industrial cities out-Jaramana. walls near the Barada riv-side of the big cities er. The Project is stopped to accommodate

ing from the southwest to the north east of the city, going near settlements. mand is estimated to be 690.000



and together with Britain and France they volt started. French warplanes Syria

1900

Less than 0,5%