PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work is indebted to the Harvard University Graduate School of Design’s Aga Khan Program of activities in landscape architecture and urbanism, under the leadership of Hashim Sarkis, for the sponsorship of “Landscapes of Development: Modernization and the Physical Environment in the Eastern Mediterranean,” the symposium at which this project was conceived. We remain grateful for the continued support of the Aga Khan Program that enabled the production of this volume.

At the symposium, scholars from a range of backgrounds relating to the history and practice of architecture, landscape architecture, and urban/regional development contemplated the interconnections between development politics and the physical transformation of Eastern Mediterranean landscapes. This historical reflection on the mid-twentieth century seemed vital because, even though that period may register as an excessively confident era of modernity—characterized by grand reformist visions, modernization creeds, and megaprojects—it also represented a moment when architecture, planning, and more broadly the design of the built environment embodied crucial social aspirations beyond the logic of the market and the demands of consumerism. This volume’s extension of the symposium’s observations on mid-twentieth-century interventions thus aims to provide a critical historical perspective on the role of “the physical” in relation to contemporary forces of globalization, environmentalism, and social equity.

Current practices of development and globalization continue to strain global human relationships and threaten the biosphere, and the particular geography of the Eastern Mediterranean is faced with the agonies of an altogether new turmoil. We hope
that presenting this study of the complex history of its built environment might encourage informed debate on the possibilities for physical landscapes to negotiate (or negate) current political, institutional, or environmental realities.

In addition to the authors presented here, many individuals contributed to this volume. Hashim Sarkis has been a consistent source of perceptive feedback. We greatly appreciated the insights of our keynote speaker, Wolfgang Sachs, who framed the larger debate on environmental/developmental politics and physical landscapes. Thanks also to Arindam Dutta and Ijaz Muzaffar, who along with Hashim Sarkis acted as moderators at the symposium, stimulating later revisions to the presentations. We would also like to acknowledge those colleagues who contributed to the symposium but chose not to have their papers included in this volume: Kelda Jamison, Geoffrey Schad, Georges Prevelakis, and Alona Nitzan-Shiftan. We are also grateful to Giselle Rose and Edna Van Saun for their administrative support. Thanks to Barbara Poss and Susan Johnson Roehr, who edited earlier versions of some chapters. We offer thanks to Jean Wilcox for her sensitive graphic design and to Melissa Vaughn, Director of Publications at the GSD, for editorial guidance.
INTRODUCTION: DEVELOPMENT HISTORIES AND THE PHYSICAL LANDSCAPE OF THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

This book examines the impact of development policies and politics on the physical environment of the Eastern Mediterranean, defined here not as a fixed region of cultural coherence but as a tentative geography where particular processes of mid-twentieth-century reconstruction, decolonization, and nation-building became intertwined developmental agendas. After the end of World War II, the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean became central to many transnational plans for socioeconomic restructuring. The various models of “development assistance” that had been offered to post-war Europe, with the goal of reestablishing economic strength and political stability for North America’s more obvious trading and military partners, quickly generated multiple variants in Latin America, Asia, and Africa. The dreams of progress and prosperity for what came to be known as “underdeveloped areas” of the globe were pursued against the backdrop of larger Cold War politics. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and multiple variants of the Marshall Plan established the model for funding poor countries to stem the spread of communism, while the Soviet Union employed its own mechanisms for offering military and financial aid. The countries of the Eastern Mediterranean possessed strategic geopolitical significance in those divisive global power politics, and both states emerging out of colonial rule (Syria, Lebanon, Iraq) and those that had not experienced colonialism directly (Turkey, Greece) found themselves receiving technical aid, development projects, and cultural exports in that “era of planning and control.” Oil wealth also played a part in financing development plans in some countries (e.g., Iraq and Libya as oil producers, or Lebanon as transit center), and this increased the momentum of state-led development among neighbors (Egypt, Syria).

The photographs that accompany the introduction can be read independently, as glimpses into particular politics of development entangled with built landscapes in the region. [Special thanks to Petros Phokalides for co-editing the image selection.]
while others explored combinations of statist measures and private enterprise (Cyprus, Greece, Turkey)—all sharing visions of economic development and social welfare.

In physical terms, the drive toward development, whether promoted by international institutions (the United Nations, development banks), corporate interests (emanating from the United States or from ex-colonial centers), national governments of the postcolonial world, or western governments pursuing bilateral agreements with new nations, has been responsible for the rapid growth of metropolitan centers, the radical restructuring of rural landscapes, and the proliferation of dams, irrigation systems, and other infrastructure. Such built works were not merely utilitarian or technical artifacts but products of larger historical circumstances. Just as the project of development itself was not simply a technocratic framework for administrative reform and industrialization but an ideology, so too were dams and irrigation networks, highways, housing projects, or spaces of public recreation active participants in debates surrounding the modernizing dreams of progress, efficiency, and comfort. Competing conceptions of economic and social change, locality and globalism, resources and standards, social equity and ecology, social participation and dependency—these were contemplated on built landscapes too, just as they were debated in the realms of policymaking and economics. As such, physical interventions constitute crucial references for contemplating postwar histories of development and their contemporary impact and repercussions.

In highlighting the physical environment as an important actor in the history of mid-twentieth-century development discourse, this volume of essays recognizes the
contribution of critiques of "the development worldview" from geography, sociology, cultural criticism, and other perspectives. Modernization theorists' assumption that there existed a singular linear pattern of development that would be defined through transformations in technology, military and bureaucratic institutions, and the political and social structure has been discredited, not only for its dualistic schema of "modern" and "traditional" societies but also for its oversimplification of the processes of decolonization and industrialization. Challenges to modernization theory emerged since the 1950s and 1960s, offering insights into how it promoted "dependency," "underdevelopment," or "maldevelopment," disenfranchising entire populations for the benefit of mostly the North American and European exporters of "aid." But such early critiques based on center-periphery dichotomies failed to account for the unevenness of development and the existence of not simply a "third" but a "fourth," "fifth," and "sixth world" (for indigenous peoples, the poor in rich countries, and migrant workers respectively). Recent geohistorical expositions of the assumptions of development practices have demonstrated how the "development idea" was intertwined with even more complex global power politics and economic agendas. They have exposed the inequality of partnerships among development institutions, local elites, and local populations, and the politics of exclusion, repression, and exploitation. Others revealed the oversimplifications of reality and the authoritarian modes of thought in modernizing agendas. Thought practices that put their sole emphasis on economic growth and industrialization—as though these could viably materialize without simultaneous provisions for social welfare or political rights—have been debunked as they failed in the necessary
"removal of substantial unfreedoms." Similarly, the cultural powers of philanthropic practices and other circuits of knowledge have also been examined. Several astute critics have demonstrated how the belief in development-as-growth advanced particular notions of nature and environment that brought on current ecological predicaments. Taken together, these works have challenged the founding divisions between "technical" strategies for socioeconomic reform and political issues of governance, power, and control, and reconsider the allegedly "technocratic" processes of design, planning, and building. More challenges to "development thinking" come from feminist or labor movement perspectives, which explore how alternative institutions can assume an agency in development processes. And recent critical investigations into "grassroots" or "counter-hegemonic" strategies for globalization (and its earlier versions of development) have underlined the significance of studying nuanced voices, perspectives, and locations. Drawing upon these insights, the chapters presented here examine how built interventions shaped the debate on concepts of space and society, technology and nature.

Another equally important theoretical reference for this volume is the growing scholarly field situating the cross-cultural histories of modern architecture and urbanism within larger political, historical, and ideological contexts. Such studies of architectural culture in different parts of the Eastern Mediterranean have exposed the ideological appropriations of built works by modernist creeds, authoritarian state policies, top-down economic agendas, nationalist aspirations, or other identity constructions. Rather than treat political and ideological agendas as a blueprint from which to explain architecture and urbanism, several such studies underline the importance of...


The creation of educational facilities—from vocational schools to training centers, to university campuses—targeted both economic and social modernization.

considering the complex cultural realities, ambiguities, and contradictions in the way physical design and building became intertwined with political and ideological agendas. If current scholarship in architectural history has already shown us that there are many modernisms, so too there are many modernizations and more broadly, many visions of development, manifested in the physical environment. This volume draws on insights of both architectural history and critiques of development to consider specific histories behind the physical transformation of multiple scales of landscapes—from dams and infrastructure to housing blocks and apartments—to highlight the nuances of the particular conceptions of space, society, science, and nature that they produced.
Just as it spans multiple disciplines, this study of physical landscapes also crosses boundaries among countries, to treat the Eastern Mediterranean as a tentative framework for grounding these nuanced reflections on the intersections of development histories and the physical environment. As mentioned earlier, the intention is not to give a comprehensive analysis of development politics in this region, and not to even define such a region as a distinct whole. The chapters presented here offer different histories of the intertwining of development and physical landscapes, treated from the start as a “process geography” aimed at setting up a comparative framework. This alternative framing interrogates the possibility of new types of overlaps, parallels, or continuities across the “Middle East,” “North Africa,” or “Southern Europe” that contemplate the transcultural impact of postwar development on these margins of Europe.

Eight essays examine formal manifestations of development, shedding light on urban development schemes, housing projects, and agro-landscapes and dams, from Israel to Turkey and from Greece to Syria. These contributions situate built works within the larger sociopolitical context that influenced their design and implementation, and collectively, they expose the entanglement of built interventions with national strategies or transnational discourses of expertise that were setting the rules for development. They offer new insights in the ways in which the marvelous power of technology (from dams to high-rises) opened new frontiers in the shaping of natural and built landscapes. They also contemplate how the appealing dream of human emancipation, associated with new housing and infrastructure, shaped visions of idealized futures while becoming entangled with conceptions of needs and standards and the rationalization of physical space. The analyses presented here also contemplate the roles of stakeholding communities or other localized politics as arbiters of planning/design strategies and modes of built production across the region, and they uncover the varieties of individual agency, even in the midst of grand social arrangements.

The volume is divided in three thematic sections, each of which allows possibilities for comparisons among cases. Some of the essays extend the discussion to more recent decades, precisely to underscore contemporary relevance of the debate. The first part considers dams and irrigation projects that redefined the countryside. The essay by Aslihan Demirtas, “Rowing Boats in the Reservoir: Infrastructure as Transplanted Seascapes,” examines infrastructure projects of the Kemalist era in Turkey and compares them to a 1950s project for hydraulic modernization, to show the socio-spatial impact and environmental excesses of postwar techno-scientific interventions. Neyran Turan’s essay “The Strait, the Beach, and the Highway: Shifting Edges of Istanbul,” examines how the transformations of Istanbul’s seafront in the 1950s, and the underlying politics of reconceptualizing Istanbul as a modern city, compared with earlier (1930s) as well as later (1990s) transformations of that seafront. In the context of Egypt, Elizabeth Bishop in “Control Room: Visible and Concealed Spaces of the Aswan High Dam” analyzes the invisible spaces behind the Aswan High Dam that shaped workers’ roles, family relationships, and ultimately the formation of Egyptian citizenship, gendered or otherwise. The second part of the book examines the restructuring of urban fabrics caused by rapid modernization. Eleni Bastéa’s and Vilma Hastaoglou-Martinidis’s essay “Modernization and Its
Discontents in Post-1950s Thessaloniki: Urban Change and Urban Narratives," focuses on the dramatic transformations of Thessaloniki’s urban form and the ambivalent reactions recorded in local literature. Sibel Bozdoğan’s essay, "Residential Architecture and Urban Landscape in Istanbul since 1950," casts the spotlight on the transformation of Istanbul’s urbanscapes, to expose how the city’s apartment boom of the 1950s promoted divisions in cultural and class politics—divisions that were exacerbated within the more recent realities of postmodern Istanbul. The third section turns to another scale in the urban fabrics of Israel, Syria, Iraq, and Greece: housing projects. Rachel Kallis’s analysis of the creation of a residential quarter in Kiryat Gat in "State-Constructed Everyday: Envisioning a Place for the National Community" demonstrates how modernist visions of standardization and rationalization became entangled with state goals of social cohesion and national progress. My analysis of housing schemes in Iraq and Syria in "Architects as Development Experts: Model Communities in Iraq and Syria" uncovers how state and international agendas of modernization were intertwined with architects’ and planners’ attempts to introduce new disciplinary goals and priorities for modern architecture and urbanism. Ioanna Theocharopoulou in "Improvising Urbanism in Postwar Athens, 1952–1974: Techniques and Processes of Another Development," examines "improvising" housing in Athens that emerged out of back-door deals among developers and politicians, and flourished outside the professional domains of architecture and planning, beyond the official control of state sponsorship—and as such, led to peculiar definitions of development. Taken together, the histories presented in the pages that follow expand the temporal dimension within which we can contemplate the design of physical landscapes amid today’s politics of development, globalization, and environmentalism.

Notes
2 Roger Owen, State Power and Politics in the Making of the Middle East (New York: Routledge, 2002), quotation on xii.
4 Modernization theory was a reductionist mode of social-scientific thought that had its heyday in the 1950s and 1960s, and assumed different cultures to be at different stages of a linear path, moving from being traditional or underdeveloped to being modern and developed. It was an ahistorical model of development that had shaped many American aid and development agencies’ policies in the 1950s and 1960s, as it provided a non-communist answer to poverty and global underdevelopment. For recent critiques of modernization theory and its legacy, see, for example, Nils Gilman, Mandarins of the Future (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), along with Sachs, ed., The Development Dictionary.
5 Andre Frankovits, "Development" in Tony Bennett, Lawrence Grossberg, and Meaghan Morris, eds., New Keywords: A Revised Vocabulary of Culture and Society (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 78–81. For an overview of dependency theory and key texts on the topic, see Roberts and Hite, eds., The Globalization and Development Reader.
7 Timothy Mitchell, Rule of Experts: Egypt, Technopolitics, Modernity (Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 2002); Abdin Kusno, Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space, and Political Cultures in Indonesia (New York: Routledge, 2000); Irene Gendzier, Notes from the


In her introductory chapter, "Modernism on the Margins of Europe," Bozdogan explains this in detail, underlining how imported ideas were intersected, justified, modified, and contested within local contexts in unique ways. Bozdogan, Modernism and Nation Building, 6.

A comparative framework for the many "modernisms" in the context of the modern Middle East is offered in Phinestadt and Rizvi, eds., Modernism and the Middle East, and in Ergut and Ozkaya, eds., "Modern Architecture in the Middle East," which focuses on the architectural culture in this region to demonstrate the diversity of voices and complex social and aesthetic agendas that constitute architectural modernism, and searches for identity. For the multiplicity of postwar modernisms in other contexts, see Sarah Williams Goldhagen and Rejean Legault, eds., Anxious Modernisms: Experimentation in Postwar Architectural Culture (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000).

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