



# **CULTURALLY-LED REGENERATION OF THE HISTORIC CITY OF TRIPOLI**

**INVITATION TO TWO WORKSHOPS**

COORDINATED BY ARCHIDES

AZM UNIVERSITY

Prepared by

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Tripoli is witnessing an unprecedented world attention as hopes of ending the war in the region have increased and the prospective role that Tripoli might be playing in terms of the post-war reconstruction is emerging. This is coupled with a renewed sense of purpose that is reinforced with current rebuilding and uplifting of the city's infrastructure and its seaport all along relentless efforts to rejuvenate the train link to Syria, the rehabilitation of Qulayaat airport, and identification of the role that the Rachid Karame International Fair may play in this period.

Despite the importance of these efforts and their objectives towards resuscitating the city stagnating economy through job creation, Tripoli cultural assets in general and the ones embedded in its historic center through its 300+ culturally significant sites in particular should not be left out as cultural-led regeneration has proven to be more inclusive, help develop artistic and creative industries, and carry a much direct impact on the people quality of life. Dating back to the 9th century BC, no doubt Tripoli carries above and under its ground a rich historical dimension- a narrative awaiting to be told. It might be the awaited opportunity to expose to the world the rich cultural heritage of this city.

## **TOPIC**

Culture-led regeneration, a term that has become a common place, came into use around 25 years ago. It denotes the opportunities for the transformation and regeneration of cities and places through cultural activities. It is mostly relevant for cities that are going through big economic changes and need to reinvent themselves through culture.

City leaders have actually understood the impact cultural events and facilities can have on shaping the image of their city; especially for cities with a bad, no image,

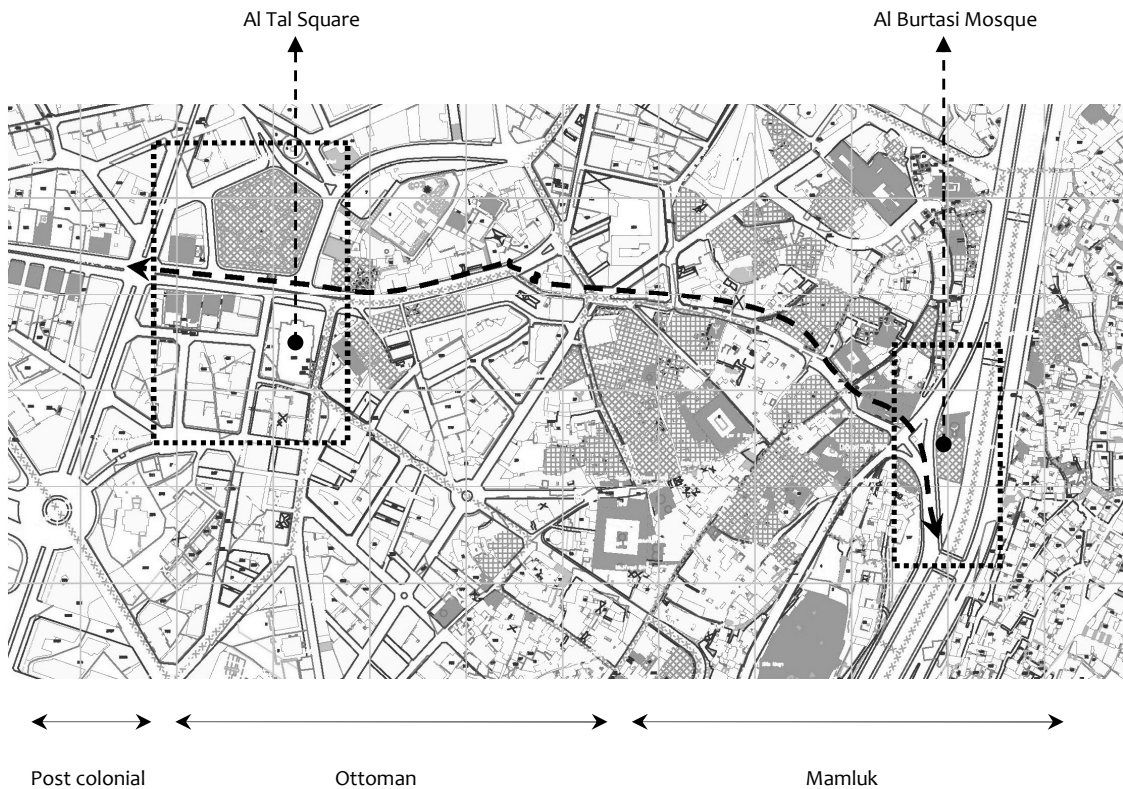
or a neglected image. They rely on the ability of its cultural assets to increase the attractiveness of the city for potential investors and newcomers but also to improve the confidence of local stakeholders in the city's future.

Given ARCHIDES' belief in the importance of economic regeneration through culture on one hand and in the need for a collective reflection on this complex undertaking for the city of Tripoli with all of the stakeholders and agents in [re]-producing space on the other, we aspire to engage a number of university programs where, together, we can help to shed light through different perspectives on ways to read/map/unravel the issues and help better articulate goals and ways to achieve them for the best benefit of the city.

Our ways to integrate the reflection of the different university programs- represented by their specialized instructors and their students- ARCHIDES is organizing two workshops that are scheduled during a week-end to avoid interruptions from their semester's course work. The details and methodology of work for these two workshops are articulated here below.

With the objective of regenerating the Old city of Tripoli through culture, the two workshops shall focus on a particular area: a 1 km pathway stretching from Al Tal Public Square in the West to another public space near Al Burtasi Mosque in the East, cutting through the three historical phases of the city: the post Colonial, the Ottoman, and the Mamluk core (the Medina).

This physical "chronological" crossing through three historical zones gives this "spine" a particular character as a "story teller" or a "narrator", where the city monuments become the "keywords", and the public spaces leading to -or around- them form the "sentences" of the story.



As such, rather than focusing on one single period, the spine is expected to play a role of a "Heritage pathway" taking the visitor from the main Al Tal public square back in time to the public space at the shore of Abu Ali River near Al Burtas Mosque and vice versa. It is an East / West cross section of the old city through different ages, perpendicular to the North / South streets of the Medina itself. The intention is to enable this spine to form a springboard for investigating issues/barriers to cultural celebration and economic regeneration and accordingly as a catalyst for positive changes in the city.

Twelve students from ARCHIDES' 3rd year in the program of Architecture have been working on mapping the 1 km spine area, unveiling its structural elements: land use at different levels, circulations, density, buildings ages, elevation, height... This data will help form the base maps upon which the first workshop will be carried.

## **OBJECTIVES & METHODOLOGY**

### **I- Workshop 1: EXPLORING**

The objective of the first workshop is to create different [visual] readings of the city mapping various phenomena in the production of space unravelling assets, agents, and barriers for the economic regeneration of the area through culture. The first two-day workshop will mostly be oriented towards site investigation. Students from the participating institutions, along with ARCHIDES students, shall form a number of groups, each group led by an instructor (s). Each group is expected to have its own agenda and tools of mapping as the success of the workshop is dependent on the varied dimensions of the issues that shall be identified. Each group is also expected to venture beyond that particular spine to unveil further areas relevant to the regeneration strategy.

This freedom and these unexpected ramifications from the main proposed spine is the key experimentation that will shape the overall master plan of the trail and gives it its multilayer dimension: as each group will be driven by its particular interest, agenda and curiosity, each group will be looking at the spine through different "lenses". A coordination meeting preceding the workshop between all participating group leaders shall help identify the different lenses through which the site shall be mapped.

For instance, while a group may focus on functional dimensions related to vehicular circulation, parking, and pedestrian movement, another group may take a pure typological approach focusing on particular key buildings as the main rhythm of their narratives or unravel active agents on the ground and solicit the identification of their direct, unfulfilled, and ultimately their latent needs. Another group may be interested in the ecological system that govern the space be it

natural or economic; while some other will focus on the sensorial experience of the space, etc.

This variety in the interests and approaches of the various groups is the driving motif behind having different groups from different university programs to investigate the city, and come up with a rich mapping of the city shedding light on the multi-dimensional perspective of the important issues to be addressed.

### **III- Workshop 2: CREATING**

During the 4 weeks between the first and the 2nd workshop, students are free to reflect on the areas that they found as potential areas of interventions.

The 2nd two-day workshop will be dedicated to working on the articulated issues in the first workshop and presenting and debating the solutions proposed by the different groups.

This workshop will conclude in a series of recommendations in the form of spatial interventions at various scales and with different programs.

## **AGENDA**

### **I- Coordination meeting:**

1. Date: Wednesday November 1st, 15:00 > 16:00 (TBD)
2. Aim: Introduce, discuss the topic, and agree on logistics
3. Participants: ARCHIDES Faculty, Participating institutions' representative(s)
4. Place: Board Meeting room, 4th Floor, AZM University



## II- Workshop 1

1. Aim: Survey the site and unveil potential areas and thematic
2. Participants: ARCHIDES Students 3rd year and Faculty, participating students and instructors
3. Place: ARCHIDES 1st year Studio / 2nd floor, AZM University
4. Dates: DAY 1: Friday 10th of November Up until 13:30 (Old City)  
14:00 > 20:00 (ARCHIDES)

TIME	TOPIC	PARTICIPANT
Up until 13:30	Independent Site Visit	All participants
14:00 > 15:00	Lunch at AZM Campus "B1" Cafeteria	All participants
15:00 > 15:20	Welcoming & Workshop Introduction	Dean Jamal Abed
15:20 > 15:40	Method and Lenses Introduction	Dr. Marwan Basmaji
15:40 > 16:00	Lenses voting and groups formation	All participants
16:00 > 17:00	<b>Lecture 1</b>	<b>Prof. Khaled Tadmori</b>
17:00 > 17:15	Break	
17:15 > 18:15	<b>Lecture 2</b>	<b>Prof. Jalal Abs</b>
18:15 > 19:15	<b>Lecture 3</b>	
19:15 > 20:00	Discussion and Evening tea	<b>Architect Hazem Aysh</b>

DAY 2: Saturday 11th of November 07:30 > 12:30 (Old City)

13:00 > 20:00 (ARCHIDES)

07:30	Meeting at AZM Campus Main gate and bus transportation to Al Tal
08:00 > 12:30	Walk and survey
12:30	Meeting at Al Bortasi Mosque and transportation to AZM Campus
13:00 > 14:00	Lunch at Azm Campus "B1" Cafeteria
14:00 > 18:30	Mapping through illustrations (4.5 hours)
18:30 > 20:00	Discussion and Conclusions
21:00 > 23:00	Dinner in El Mina for Instructors and Guest Speakers / Critics

### III- Workshop 2

1. Aim: Present and discuss potential proposals
2. Participants: ARCHIDES Students 3rd year and Faculty, Participating institutions' students and instructors
3. Place: ARCHIDES 1st year Studio / 2nd floor, AZM University
4. Dates: Friday 1st of December 14:00 > 17:00  
Saturday 2nd of December 09:00 > 18:00

### PROJECT TIMETABLE

PHASE	DATE	TOPIC
EXPLORE	Wednesday, November 1st	Coordination meeting
	Friday & Saturday, November 10th & 11th	Workshop 1
CREATE	Friday & Saturday, December 1st & 2nd	Workshop 2

### PARTICIPATING UNIVERSITIES (in alphabetical order)

- American University of Beirut
- Beirut Arab University
- Lebanese University
- Manar University of Tripoli

### LOGISTICS AND EQUIPMENTS

- Buses will be available for all participants between the Old City (Al Tal Square) and AZM Campus at the indicated times
- AZM University will provide catering for the public lectures day on Friday, and food & beverage for lunch during the working session on Saturday.
- Color photocopy machine / printer (A3 size) and a large scanner are available during the working session on Saturday

## INVOLVED FACULTY FROM ARCHIDES



Jamal H. Abed, Dean

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Jamal Abed is the Dean of the Faculty of Architecture & Design [ARCHIDES] since its inception in the spring of 2015. Before returning back to the academic field, he was acting as a member of the Board and the Director of the Planning and Design Division at Millennium Development International Holding for around 13 years. Before joining Millennium in 2003, Mr. Abed was an Associate Professor, chairman of the Department of Architecture and Design, and Program Coordinator of the Masters Program in Urban Planning & Urban Design, at the American University of Beirut. He was a full-timer at the Department of Architecture and Design at AUB between 1988 and 2003. He obtained a bachelor degree in Architecture from the same university in 1982 and a graduate degree in Architectural Studies from MIT in 1988. He is an author of a number of publications and winner of many grants, the most prominent of which is the Fulbright scholarship. Combining thirty three years of academia and professional expertise in architecture and urban design, Dean Abed played an essential role in raising the standards of the program at AUB and in directing complex development projects that span a wide geographic spread ranging between Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Oman, Russia, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Iraq, and Turkey. His plans for ARCHIDES to distinguish itself through a rigorous integration of academic research in undergraduate education culminating into a design scholarship that positively impacts its graduates, the local community, and the discipline at large is now grounded in the distinct quality of its growing staff, state-of-the art facilities, and dynamic and innovative curriculum.



Dr. Marwan Basmaji

Full-time Assistant Professor

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Following his architectural studies in Lebanon at USEK (1992-1999), Dr. Marwan Basmaji continued his postgraduate studies as a member of Tadao Ando Academic Laboratory at the University of Tokyo in Japan (2001-2008). During his studies, he also worked shortly at Arata Isozaki and Associates on a project in Beirut, before establishing Basmaji and Bielinska Architects (BBA) along with Mrs. Kamila Bielinska-Basmaji. Dr. Basmaji taught, directed design workshops, participated in conferences and was a guest critic at various institutions in Mexico, Poland, Switzerland, Tunisia, Bahrain, Oman, UAE, Lebanon and Cyprus. In 2012, BBA studio won the Young Arab Architects Honor Award/ Venice Biennale 2012, and the International Union of Architects Award for Young Architects-Leonardo Award in 2013, for the design of Barbar Temples Visitors Center in Bahrain, a commission by Bahrain Ministry of Culture. Other awards include the 1st prize in the Future Vision Leisure Architectural Competition, Austria; the 2nd prize in the Environment Competition by ESCWA-UN, Lebanon; the 3rd prize for the Wodka Museum in Poland and the Award of Merit in Kobe International Biennale, Japan.



**Francesco Polesello**  
Full-time Associate Professor  
(New faculty member)  
e-mail: [fpolesello@azmuniversity.edu.lb](mailto:fpolesello@azmuniversity.edu.lb)

Francesco Polesello graduated from Università Iuav di Venezia (IUAV) in Venice and holds a master's degree in urban design from USC Los Angeles, where he was also a Teaching Assistant between 1986 and 1988. In Italy, he launched his career through the family architectural firm, and became a Teaching Assistant at IUAV and later an Associate Professor in Design in 1992. During this period, he participated at Tempus/Phare, a triennial European academic program focusing on architectural and urban design in collaboration with IUAV (Italy), Polytechnika of Krakowska (Poland), Fachhochschule Cottbus (Germany), Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (Spain), Escuela Técnica Superior de Arquitectura de Sevilla (Spain). Mr. Polesello has taken part in many local and international competitions, receiving prizes and awards. Besides having developed the master plans for local authorities and municipalities, his achievements include various public and private design projects published in books and magazines. Since 2005, he has had professional experience in various countries including Lebanon, Italy, Equatorial Guinea, Nigeria and Kazakhstan.



**Hala Abi Haydar**  
Part-time Senior Lecturer  
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Holder of a Bachelor degree in Architecture from the American University of Beirut

Mrs. Abi Haydar is Lecturer in the field of architecture and design and a syndicated freelance architect with more than 20 years' experience of which 9 years are spent in the academic domain. She is currently teaching in a number of universities being in charge of both theoretical and practical design studio courses in the discipline of Architecture. Her concentration is history of architecture, covering the Prehistoric all through to the Modern periods. Her seminar courses also explore architecture production in the post-modern condition. Her design research track that informs her design studios is to infuse a sense of experimentation, discovery, and inquisition about architectural spatial design in general, and to incite the students to develop a sensitive, critical and analytical eye towards their environment and the architectural manifestations as directly related to their very own culture.