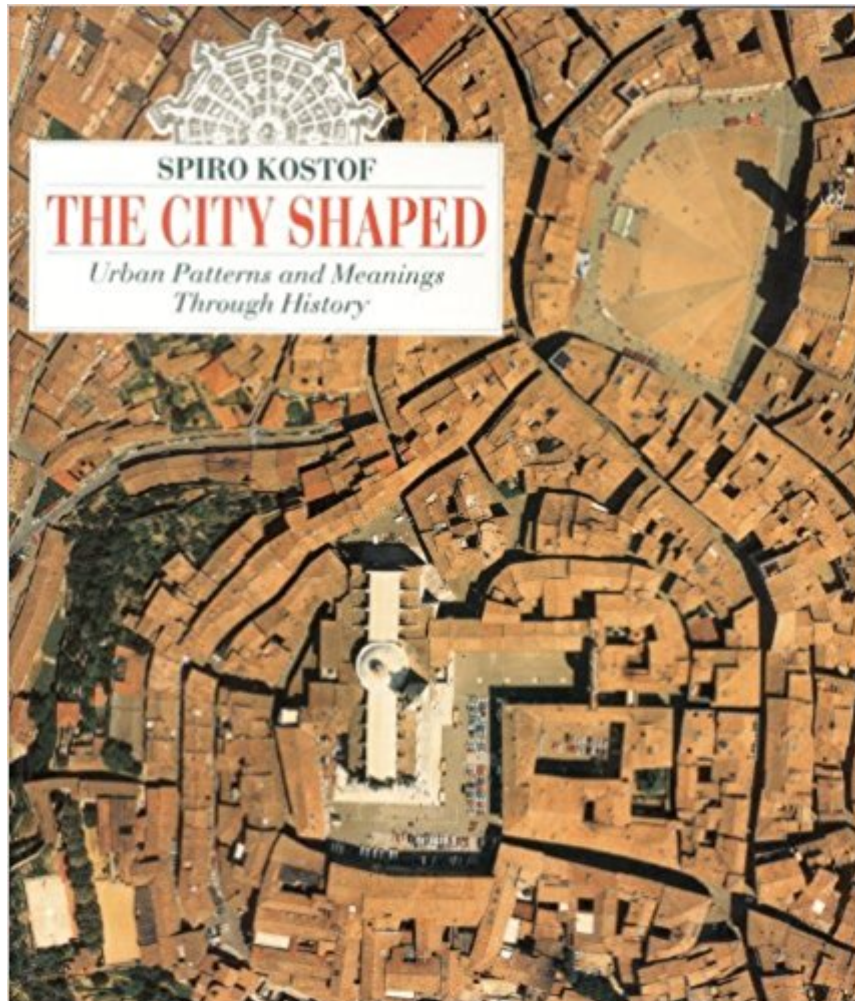


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# The City Shaped: Urban Patterns And Meanings Through History



## Synopsis

Spanning the ages and the globe, Spiro Kostof explores the city as a "repository of cultural meaning" and an embodiment of the community it shelters. Widely used by both architects and students of architecture, *The City Shaped* won the AIA's prestigious book award in Architecture and Urbanism. With hundreds of photographs and drawings that illustrate Professor Kostof's innovative ideas, this has become one of the most important works on urbanization.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Kostof has done it again; in prolific fashion he has produced another standard textbook. This time his subject is cities rather than architecture, which he covered in *A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals* (LJ 6/1/85). This book will appeal especially to designers, architects, and planners, as it organizes its subject matter according to what form it takes (grids, diagrams, skylines, etc.) rather than chronologically, topically, or typologically, as do other surveys of urbanism. Kostof is a master tour guide, blessed with an easy writing style, a piquant, welcoming mind, and a worldwide mastery of his subject matter. This book is certain to become a classic in its field comparable to Lewis Mumford's *Culture of Cities* (1933) and Mark Girouard's *Cities and People* (LJ 10/15/85).- Peter Kaufman, Boston Coll. Copyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Spiro Kostof (1936-1991) was a professor of Architectural History at the University of California at

Berkley, and also taught at M.I.T., and at Yale, Columbia, and Rice universities. His many books include *The Architect: Chapters in The History of the Profession* (1977) and *A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals* (1985), now a standard text. He edited *America by Design* (1987), the companion to a five-part television series that he presented. Kostof also published *The City Shaped* with Bulfinch Press in 1991.

Extremely interesting and well documented book on the different methods humans have used in their quest to create the ideal city. Although not arranged chronologically but typologically, the book covers history's clearest examples of the variety of urban design theory. A must for the urban / architecture professional and aficionado.

Well written, consistently interesting and structured around the challenges of topography and the urban form demands invoked by market needs, political architectures and cultural expectations through history, this beautifully illustrated book delivers the promise of its title and a lot more. Because the author, Spiro Kostof, organized his book by patterns and topological relationships, the text compresses history and geographies into a comparative perspective. This presents a disadvantage to the reader if he/she is interested in only one time, one culture or even just one architectural movement. On the other hand, the comparative perspective lends authority to Kostof's overarching theoretical approach of connecting urban forms to context and how those relationships persist across the spectrum of the human experience. A must for any architect's or planner's library.

The book is very illustrative, the author is clear and uses many examples. He focuses on the physical shape of cities and how they have been altered throughout history. This is not a history book, this book is very architectural, if that is not your goal, you might reconsider it.

I really like this book, there are a lot of made up cities and towns in some of the games that I play and I find it fascinating how historical cities and fantasy cities are designed. The author lays out some different design styles for cities and then shows some examples of historical cities that match these styles. A good reference for anyone designing fantasy maps, or just students of architecture or history.

no complaints

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very good book

This field of study has been a lifelong interest. It is a worthy addition to a basic library, and I bought it as a Xmas gift to a young friend who shares my interest.

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