

The persistence of the type - following plans and building regulation footprints in the urban forms of Coimbra houses

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This paper focuses on the interdependence between building types and the image of the city as well as on the interaction between building regulations and residential forms. The identification of a set of typological systems, based on the morpho-typologic axiom developed in Italy, in both Milan and Venetian architecture schools, in the 1950's and 1960's, brings us the possibility to structure the image of the city of Coimbra. The methodology is based on the study of the common housing types which constitute the majority of the city buildings. By analyzing more than two hundred construction licenses in the city council archives, dated from 1940 to 2002, I have tried to understand the dialectic relation between housing types and building regulations and urban planning. This long term research covers four great periods of the modern urban legislation and corresponds to four different city plans implementations. The main working hypothesis was that of an evolutionary bond between urban housing forms, building regulations, and city plan design rules. The conclusions highlight the specific way in which this bond has been established and also in what directions it has been evolving throughout the time. Moreover, it will show the potential of reusing design codes and guidelines to bring back the city form identity. The revisitation of classic building regulations seems to be a positive way to control urban form in the process of rehabilitation of individual and collective houses. The aim is, therefore, to preserve and recreate the city according to the local architectural types.

Keywords: Urban form, city plan rules, building regulation, typologies, architectural types