



# Ethics and Urban Design: Culture, Form, and Environment

*Gideon S. Golany*

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"The city," according to urban design scholar Gideon Golany, is "the largest and most complicated project ever produced by humankind." In *Ethics and Urban Design*, he challenges design professionals to reexamine their basic assumptions about the urban environment and offers design strategies based on enduring human values.

In search of answers to the paradoxical problems of the modern city, Golany takes the reader through the sweep of human settlements from the dawn of civilization to the present. His authoritative examination of the genesis of the city is illuminated by instructive examples of early urban centers. Mesopotamia, the Indus River Valley, the Egyptian cities of the Nile, and the capital cities of ancient China--all are examined in the light of what made them work as major centers of human activity.

What Golany finds in the success stories of the past are cohesive sociocultural values that shaped the design of homes, neighborhoods, and cities. These ethical values helped to maintain an equilibrium within the society that permeated its natural, social, and human-made environments. In the present era, conversely, he finds a major disconnection between human values and the ethics of technology, which has resulted in confusion, imbalance, and dehumanization.

To help designers gain a perspective on possible solutions, Golany explains leading comprehensive design strategies, including the valley theory, the urban border zone concept, and the regional concept of Patrick Geddes. In the case study of contemporary Holland, he details what a small, densely populated country has been able to achieve through design planning rooted in environmental ethics.

"Future Frontiers for Urban Design," the culminating section of this groundbreaking book, opens with Golany's vision of the future city. He examines the issues of thermal performance and climate as they relate to urban design and offers the concept of "geospace"--the earth-enveloped habitat. Buttressing his presentation with detailed information on the mechanics of geospace, Golany describes case studies of the successful use of earth-enveloped habitats in China and Tunisia. He makes a powerful argument for the geospace city as a renewal of ancient traditions that can restore the vital equilibrium between nature and human settlements that we seem to have lost.

*Ethics and Urban Design* is a distinguished scholar's analysis and prescription for the city; it offers an abundance of stimulating ideas for the architects, designers, and planners who have assumed responsibility for its future.

*Ethics & Urban Design* draws on historical examples and contemporary case studies from around the world to illustrate urban design strategies that can help restore equilibrium to the natural, social, and built environments of the city. In this stimulating book, urban design scholar Gideon Golany offers architects, designers, and planners both an in-depth analysis of the fundamental issues of urban design and practical options for the design of the future city.

\* Examines the genesis and development of the city from the earliest presettlements to the rise of urban society

\* Presents urban design strategies based on historical examples of early urban centers, including Mesopotamia, the Indus River Valley, Egypt, and China

- \* Offers case studies of environmental success stories from Europe, Asia, and Africa
- \* Details geospace design options--the use of underground space for diversified land use, housing, and transportation
- \* Fully illustrated, with over 80 photographs, drawings, and diagrams

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