

# SUBMISSION ASSESSMENT

Date 10th July 75

## OMAN

In terms of sheer volume of work this is a most impressive study. The authors have attempted to cover the nature of indigenous buildings in the State of Oman and the lessons which they have learned from it, including their implications for planning and design in a most comprehensive way. The fact that the pages are unnumbered and that there is no index in so vast a study makes precise references exceedingly difficult.

Having made copious notes on the content and endeavoured to follow through some of the references eg. the Whitehead report, I have come to the conclusion that, as far as I am aware, the study could hardly be improved upon for its thoroughness of documentation. I have, however, no personal knowledge of Oman and hence this conclusion relates to the extent of the record and analysis of climate, performance characteristics of building materials, methods of construction, plans and layouts of courtyard houses, and so on. At almost every level of study in these areas, the team seems to have devoted energy, thought and attention to the subjects concerned.

I have nevertheless, a number of major reservations about the study. In the first place, it seems totally unclear to me as to whom the work is directed. I cannot really imagine any local planning officials in Oman reading the entire volume and developing a policy towards the future of Oman from this study. I greatly fear it will suffer the fate of so many studies, many of which have been far less copious or thorough, and gather dust on some bureaucrat's shelf. The problem I think is that there is a lack of philosophical overview at the commencement of the study which explains why it has been undertaken and to whom it is directed and the kinds of observations or conception which have informed the entire work. In other words, the documentation has been extraordinarily complete, but if research of this kind is to be useful it is more than the exhaustive accumulation of minutiae. It has to be synthesised in a way that is comprehensible to the intended user and manageable in a way that can be further filtered to subordinates, to committees, to planning authorities, and so on. The article on Salala in the Architectural Association Quarterly was, I felt, along the right lines and this policy could very satisfactorily be applied to complete work.

## Student

Allan Cain  
Farroukh Afshar  
~~John Norton~~

year Left

unit

term 3rd

## Submission

OMAN: GENERAL  
STUDIES THESIS

## Assessment

PASS

By

PAUL OLIVER

# SUBMISSION ASSESSMENT

Date

cont... /2

In one respect, the volume seems very like a vast series of appendices to a study yet to be written. I feel that some of the introductory summaries to particular sections, eg. the climate introduction to Northern Uplands, the climatic influence on house-form, the evolution of the courtyard house, and the socio-economic influences on a settlement etc. can be grouped together to make a more simplified yet holistic statement adequately referenced and accompanied with a volume containing this mass of documentation effectively indexed. It could both make a potent argument and support it with the data necessary for action.

I cannot fault it in terms of content, but only have my reservations in its organisation. I hope that the proposed study of Luristan in Iran will bear these points in mind, as I have no doubt that the team will eventually do some very notable work in this field.

PAUL OLIVER

Student

year

unit

term

Submission

Assessment

By

## Assessment

OMAN - Allan Cain, Farroukh Afshar, John Norton

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A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul Oliver".

Paul Oliver