

A Study on the Historical Condominiums in the Mediterranean World

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[SYNOPSIS]

In this study project, we chose several significant areas of South Italy and Andalusia where we can find long historical experiences to live in the high level urban dwellings from the ancient period and we did field researches on the condominiums in the historic districts. We studied not only physical and hard aspects like architectural composition , planning method, relationship with streets etc. but also social and soft aspects like family component , living condition, ownership, maintenance-system etc..

In South Italy we did research particularly on a historic marine town Amalfi located near to Napoli. We did architectural survey and interview in many houses from the viewpoint of collectivity. We could understand well the process of urban development of Amalfi situated on two sides of slopes in a Valley opened toward the Sea. Each house shows us an interesting process of vertical development adding upper stories. Several approaches are combined well in the same house and charming collective open-spaces were realized around the houses. From each house , inhabitants can enjoy panoramic view through their windows. The inclination of the slopes was positively utilized to realize such characteristics of urban environment of Amalfi.

In Andalusia, we did research particularly on a small town Arcos de la Frontera close to Sevilla. We did architectural survey and interview for many courtyard type houses. We analyzed the process of transformation from domus type house for one extended family (influenced from Arabic culture) to condominium for plural families (common in the Christian community). And also the needs of modern society accelerated the process of subdivision of court yard house to plural families.

We observed also the rules for collective use of open spaces (patio, outer staircase, rooftop etc.), and the maintenance- system etc. of condominiums.

We could confirm that such studies on the long historical experiences in the Mediterranean cities to live in the condominiums can be very useful for the housing project in Japanese cities of nowadays.