



Università
degli Studi
di Ferrara

DA Dipartimento
Architettura
Ferrara



ARCHITECTURE IN CONTEXT:

RE-CONCEPTUALIZING BUFFER ZONES
OF THE HISTORIC CITIES AS DESIGN
INSTRUMENTS IN THE INTEGRATION OF
CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT

Candidate: Marsela DEMAJ

Polis Supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Skender Luarasi

DA Supervisor: Prof. Theo Zaffagnini

Cycle XXXVIII



Università
degli Studi
di Ferrara

IUSS

IDAUP

International Doctorate in Architecture and Urban Planning



Università
degli Studi
di Ferrara

DA

Dipartimento
Architettura
Ferrara



INTERNATIONAL DOCTORATE IN ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN PLANNING

CYCLE XXXVIII

IDAUP COORDINATOR: Prof. Theo Zaffagnini

ARCHITECTURE IN CONTEXT:

*RE-CONCEPTUALIZING BUFFER ZONES OF THE HISTORIC CITIES AS DESIGN
INSTRUMENTS IN THE INTEGRATION OF CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT*

*Curriculum: 1) Architecture, Research Topic: 1.11) Architectural and urban design
methodologies, adaptive reuse tools, and strategies for art and culture in inclusive cities and
sustainable environments, also considering the built environment,*

Area SSD: 08/CEAR-09: Architectural design/ CEAR-09/A: Architectural and Urban Design

Candidate

Supervisor POLIS

Marsela Demaj

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Skender Luarasi

(Unife Matr.No.188869)

(Polis Univ. Matr.No. PL581N110001)

Supervisor DA

Prof. Theo Zaffagnini

Years 2022 / 2025

I declare that this document is an original work of my own authorship.

Acknowledgements

This PhD journey is particularly dedicated to my parents, great teachers both in profession and at home. They taught me how to be kind, honest and with integrity. Their force, sacrifices as well as unconditional love and strong belief in me, have encouraged and accompanied me through the journey of my life including this one.

I am grateful for my life companion Armando, who walks by me every day and whose love and support are constants which I have never missed. Thank you for existing, thank you for the patience when I lack it and for being calm when I am not.

To my three children Saim, Imran and Ines! You have lightened my life with your existence. I see you growing every day with needs, questions and dreams and hold dearest to my heart your every smile, kiss and hug as the best motivations in my life. Balancing research and motherhood has not been easy, but our being together is my greatest force.

Deep and sincere appreciation go to my Polis Supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Skender Luarasi who is an inspiration and a true model of researcher for me. His guidance as well as thought sharing and daily discussions have been a great help in shaping my critical thought, my thesis and in my growth as a researcher. Big thanks also to my DA supervisor Prof. Theo Zaffagnini, who patiently supported and guided me in this journey.

My brother Çeti and my sister Donika have been the greatest believers in my success and also the best supporters. I love them both endlessly. Together with my other sisters Ela, Nina and Erlinda as well as my other brother Saj, they all are true inspirations in terms of their force of character, work ethics and persistence towards fronting the challenges of life, all elements that great people are made of. Thanks to all members of my family for the care and encouragement throughout the way. Finally, I owe greatly to my grandmothers and grandfather whose existence have enriched my early childhood life and who have filled my soul with joy. They are true angels to me.

I want to thank my longtime friends Drilona, Bona, Egla, with whom I have shared the best part of my school life as well as Ronela, Klodjana, Sonila with whom I shared office hours, tasks and first projects during my professional life. They encouraged me to undertake this journey, and they are some of the people I always feel close to my heart even when we are miles apart.

This thesis is a result of passionate work with architectural and urban heritage. Ajet Nallbani and Prof. Emin Riza have been the first ones who encouraged me to be curious, to love built heritage and urban heritage and to learn to preserve it free of prejudices of any sort.

Lastly, I thank everyone who has supported this work. I also want to acknowledge the support of researchers and colleagues Asso. Prof. Dr. Llazar Kumaraku, Dr. Genti Avdija, Dr. Ledian Bregasi, Dr. Malvina Istrefaj as well as students at Polis University with whom I shared the joy of teaching and the pleasure of discussing on built heritage, architecture and urban planning.

Abstract

Architecture in context explores how architecture can engage meaningfully with the boundaries of historic urban centres by rethinking buffer zones, not merely as normative protective tools, but as active instruments of urban design. Beginning with a historical investigation of the evolving concept of Built Heritage, the research traces how heritage theory has gradually expanded to include not only the monument and its immediate surroundings, but also the wider urban setting. Additionally, it explores on the concept of value and its evolution towards a values-based approach.

It further questions and deconstructs the concept of buffer zone, by analysing registered existing realities in a selected number of Historic Urban centres that exhibit complex interdependencies between designated heritage sites, their buffer zones, and broader settings. A comparative case study methodology is used, attempting to develop a conceptual classification of buffer zones and investigating design approaches and urban regulation practices across international case studies. A particular focus is placed on the World Heritage city of Berat, Albania, offering a detailed examination of its challenges and opportunities.

The thesis examines how buffer zones, beyond their regulatory role, can function as spatial frameworks that mediate between heritage preservation, urban development, and sustainable planning. It proposes that by embedding heritage values into territorial planning tools, these areas can offer place-specific means to reconcile continuity and change. The research aims to contribute to the international discourse on understanding and affecting change in historic urban areas by addressing a notable gap in heritage-based territorial planning. It argues that by redefining buffer zones as dynamic and values-based design tools, planners and architects can better integrate conservation and development in heritage-rich urban sites.

Keywords

Urban Heritage, Buffer zones, Research by Design, Territorial Management, Values-based approach, Historic urban

Abstract in Italian

Architectura nel Contesto esplora come l'architettura possa confrontarsi in modo significativo con i margini dei centri urbani storici, ripensando le zone di rispetto (*buffer zones*) non soltanto come strumenti di tutela, ma come dispositivi attivi di progettazione urbana. A partire da un'indagine storica sull'evoluzione del concetto di Patrimonio Costruito, la ricerca ricostruisce come la teoria del patrimonio si sia progressivamente ampliata sino a includere non solo il monumento e il suo immediato intorno, ma anche il più ampio contesto urbano. Inoltre, approfondisce il concetto di valori e la sua evoluzione verso un approccio basato sui valori. La tesi mette in discussione e decostruisce ulteriormente il concetto di zone di rispetto (*buffer zones*), analizzando realtà esistenti e registrate in una selezione di centri urbani storici che presentano complesse interdipendenze tra siti patrimoniali designati, le relative *buffer zones* e i contesti più estesi. Viene adottata una metodologia comparativa basata su casi studio, con l'obiettivo di sviluppare una classificazione concettuale delle *buffer zones* e di indagare approcci progettuali e pratiche regolative urbane attraverso casi internazionali. Particolare attenzione è rivolta alla città patrimonio mondiale di Berat, in Albania, offrendo un'analisi approfondita delle sue sfide e opportunità.

La tesi esamina se le *buffer zones*, oltre al loro ruolo normativo, possano funzionare come quadri spaziali in grado di mediare tra conservazione del patrimonio, sviluppo urbano e pianificazione sostenibile. Propone che, integrando i valori patrimoniali negli strumenti di pianificazione territoriale, tali aree possano offrire modalità specifiche per riconciliare continuità e cambiamento. In ultima analisi, la ricerca mira a contribuire al dibattito internazionale sulla gestione del cambiamento nei tessuti urbani storici, affrontando una lacuna rilevante nella pianificazione territoriale basata sul patrimonio. Sostiene che ridefinendo le *buffer zones* come strumenti dinamici di progettazione basati sui valori, urbanisti ed architetti possano integrare in modo più efficace conservazione e sviluppo nei siti urbani a elevata densità patrimoniale.

Parole chiave

Patrimonio urbano, Zone Cuscinetto, Ricerca tramite il design, Gestione territoriale, Approccio basato sui valori, Paesaggio Urbano Storico

Table of Contents

Abstract	iv
Abstract	vi
Abstract in Italian	vii
Table of Contents	viii
List of Figures	x
List of Tables	xvi
List of	xvii
1. Why Buffer Zone? - Introduction	1
1.1 Introduction	2
1.2 Problem statement.....	10
1.3 Why Buffer zones?	13
1.4 Research Objectives.....	19
1.5 Research Question	20
1.6 Methodology	20
1.6.1 Structure of the Research	23
2 Why, When and How did the Concept(s) of Setting became relevant?	25
2.1 Conservation and new developments in the historic urban setting: An historic overview in international context.....	26
2.1.1 Slow Pre-existences, from Renaissance foundations to the Baroque City	27
2.1.2 New / fast beginnings, 19 th Century as a Turning Point	37
2.1.3 The historic city during the Modern Movement	49
2.1.4 Between the World Wars	55
2.1.5 1940-1970s	59
2.1.6 Post-Modernism	62
2.1.7 Revivalism - urban management ideals after Modernism	65
3 Buffer Zone Normative and Function.....	70
3.1 The concept of Surroundings and Buffer zones normative in the World Heritage Context	71
3.2 The concept of Surroundings and Buffer Zone normative – Overview in Albania	82

3.2.1	The legal and regulatory framework: from centralized control to decentralized administration	83
3.3	Governance: From Centralized Authority to Fragmentation	90
4	Modes of Intervention in Buffer Zones - INDICATORS	95
4.1	Modes of Intervention in Buffer zones	96
4.2	Indicators on Modes of Intervention in Buffer zones	100
5	Analysis of Regulatory and Design approaches in Buffer Zones.....	103
5.1	Case Studies and Precedents in Albania	104
5.1.1	Berat, Albania	108
5.1.2	Kruja, Albania.....	117
5.1.3	Tirana, Albania	125
5.1.4	Durrës, Albania	140
5.1.5	Finiq, Albania	147
5.1.6	Selected Fortifications (Fortified Settlements), Albania	151
5.1.7	Relevance of the field studies for the research.	152
5.2	Case studies and Precedents in International Context.....	153
5.2.1	Rome, Italy.....	155
5.2.2	Brugge, Belgium	163
5.2.3	Paris, France.....	176
5.2.4	Edinburgh, Scotland.....	184
5.2.5	Warsaw, Poland.....	187
5.2.6	Dubrovnik, Croatia	190
5.2.7	Vienna, Austria.....	202
5.2.8	Graz, Austria	215
5.2.9	London, Great Britain	217
6	Conclusions	223
6.1	Summary of findings	225
6.2	Comparative Analysis	226
6.3	Policy Implications and Recommendations	230
6.4	Suggestions for future research and practice	231

List of Figures

Figure 1-1 Zoning map of Berat museum city, 1961, source: Technical Archive of the National Institute for Cultural Heritage. The map depicts Musum area and Protective area, while the author of this research has marked also the area of projected extension of the modern centre at the western edge of the Museum area.	5
Figure 1-2 Contrasting a 14th century city (above) with the same city during the 19th century (below), Source: (Pugin, 1898).....	8
Figure 1-3 illustration showing a comparison by putting in balance the 14 th century city and 19 th century city (Pugin, 1898).....	8
Figure 1-4 – Diagram of the Historic Accretion of the Historic Centre of Berat (world heritage site), a hill town that has had an uninterrupted urban life since 4 th Cent.bC	15
Figure 1-5 – Diagram showing the centripetal force that the Historic Core (in red) exercises to its immediate surroundings	16
Figure 1-6 – Diagram of the Projected extension of Paris during the 19 th cent, Source: (Moholy-Nagy, 1968) redrawn by the author.....	17
Figure 1-7 – Diagram of the Projected extension of Tirana during the early 20 th cent, Diagram drawn by the author based on the map of Tirana 1937 (Figure 5-16) - the ottoman city is in grey whereas the proposed cut of a monumental boulevard is in yellow, grid developments in the south below (also the administration of the river bed as a straight line is visible in the proposal.....	17
Figure 1-8 – (Left) Type 3 of surroundings Diagram - “Vertical Palimpsest” (Historic core in red, Surroundings/buffer in white), (Right) View of Durrës, Albania where the ancient layering (roman amphitheatre) coexists with the upper byzantine (fortification) and medieval layers (vernacular) and contemporary buildings	18
Figure 1-9 – (Left) Type 4 of Surroundings Diagram - Landscape as buffer (Historic core in red, Surroundings/buffer in white), (right) illustration of the castle hill in Berat, the surroundings of the fortified settlement consists in a natural steep slope	19
Figure 1-10 - Structure of the historical-theoretical-critical analysis on how, when and why the setting of historic cities became relevant? The horizontal axis marks time since the analysis develops in a historic chronology, The vertical axis registers two tendencies of either integration (+) or erasure (-) based on registered modes of interaction between “new” and “old”	21
Figure 1-11 - Research Scheme, main work packages, methodology	22
Figure 2-1 - View of Old St. Peter's, Rome, in Ruins, Maarten van Heemskerck (1498–1574)	28
Figure 2-2 – Colosseum, Hieronymus Cock.....	28
Figure 2-3 – Illustrations of Giovanni Antonio Dosio documenting monument vestiges state of conservation as well as documenting monuments surroundings. Source:(Dosio, 1569)	29
Figure 2-4 - Plan of Rome, first published in 1574 by Étienne Dupérac. Source:	

https://raremaps.com/gallery/detail/74291	30
Figure 2-5 - <i>Descriptio Urbis Romae</i> by Leon Battista Alberti - Graphic restitution source:(Valenti & Romor, 2019) – the reference point of the map (marked as red dot by the author) is the Capitol Hill	30
Figure 2-6 Plan of Rome, commissioned by Pope Sixtus V and designed by Domenico Fontana (late 16 th Cent). The single buildings are the <i>foci</i> departing from which the extension of spaces is designed. <i>Source: reconstruction by Giedion, found Norberg-Schulz (1968), diagram of the routes scheme and visual connections of vertical terminus elements, redrawn by the author</i>	33
Figure 2-7 – Blondel’s plazas introduced in medieval Strasbourg in 1768. The plazas’ volumes are sculptured in space, while the buildings’ elevations are considered as simple delineation	34
Figure 2-8 View and plan of St. Peters Square, designed by Bernini.....	35
Figure 2-9 (above) Etching by Giuseppe Vasi, 1656-67 -1756 showing the piazza in front of Santa Maria della Pace, Rome. Façade designed by Pietro da Cortona, (below) plan of St. Maria della Pace	35
Figure 2-10 Pierre Patte drawing - Proposal for a modern sewer system c. 1769 Engraving	36
Figure 2-11 Pierre Patte plan of Paris 1769	36
Figure 2-12 Partial View of the Commissioners Plan for Manhattan 1807	38
Figure 2-13 Haussmann Plan for Paris, roadways built between 1852 and 1914	39
Figure 2-14 Haussmann Plan for Paris, buildings built between 1852 and 1914	39
Figure 2-15 View of a Phalanstere common space and leisure activities.....	41
Figure 2-16 Plan of Vienna after the demolishing of the fortification bastions (1860). The landscape belt left around the old core (highlighted in yellow) and the created suburbs (C-H) are visible in the photo.	45
Figure 2-17 Le Corbusier’s Ville Voisin (1925)	50
Figure 2-18 Views from CIAM 1 Declaration of La Sarraz, 1928, (left) and from CIAM 4, 1933 (The Charter of Athens) right,.....	52
Figure 2-19 - View from the works of the II International Congress of Restoration, Photo taken by S. Carillo, Source: (Pane, 1964)	54
Figure 2-20 (left) – Giuseppe Samona New Parliament Offices, 1967 – (Right) Unbuilt Venice Hospital project, Le Corbusier 1963-64	58
Figure 2-21 Book Cover, Fatti (1973) promoted the use of traditional materials and techniques in rebuilding vernacular settlements.....	66
Figure 3-1 – Scheme showing relation between OUV – Attributes and the role of Buffer zones in the protection of Attributes that convey the OUV	74
Figure 3-2 - Timeline of evolution of the historic setting concept and institutionalization of the Buffer Zone concept in international heritage conservation (1931–2021). The diagram illustrates the differentiated evolution of contextual protection in heritage conservation, distinguishing between expert doctrinal charters, binding treaty law, and UNESCO soft-law instruments. The buffer zone concept emerged through layered normative development rather than direct chronological legal codification.	78
Figure 3-3 Scheme showing decision steps in understanding significance (Source: Australia Icomos 2013).....	80
Figure 3-4 Timeline of national Legislation concerning urban heritage, main links to international legislation are shown in red.	87
Figure 3-5 Chart showing the large number of cultural heritage sites in respect of the small number of protected / buffer zones designated for cultural heritage	

sites. Source: Adapted by the author basen on the national Monuments List.....	88
Figure 3-6 Changes in organizational structure for the administration of Regional Directorates of Cultural Heritage	92
Figure 3-7 Legal Procedure scheme – designating buffer zones of single monuments (law 2018).....	93
Figure 4-1 – Time line analysis showing modes of intervention in the different historic periods and their classification based on the two tendencies namely integration with the “Old” or erasure of the “Old”. The timeline is developed by the author based on the Historical and theoretical analysis in Chapter 2.	97
Figure 5-1 – View of the city of the Historic Centre of Berat and its buffer zone. Source: photo of the author, (2022)	108
Figure 5-2 Historic centre of Berat- map showing the three historic neighbourhoods. Source: Joint Management Plan Berat and Gjirokastra 2028 - 2022	109
Figure 5-3 – Types of Buildings from different periods of construction in Berat	112
Figure 5-4 – Current Zoning Plan of The Historic Centre and Buffer zone of the World Heritage Site UNESCO, Source: National Institute for Cultural Heritage	113
Figure 5-5 –Historic Centre and Buffer of Berat World Heritage site in relation to topography of the city. (Source: developed by the author).....	115
Figure 5-6 - Kruja, sketch by Eward Lear (1848).....	118
Figure 5-7 - The position of the old Bazaar in respect to the castle (2015), source: author	120
Figure 5-8 - The old Bazaar as the main element towards the development of the open city towards the north.	121
Figure 5-9– (left) urban layout around the old bazaar (in red) in 1994, (right) urban layout around the old bazaar (in red) in 2015.....	122
Figure 5-10 (left) view of the bazaar after WWII highlighting the bazaar mosque as common element in both pictures, source: Technical Archive of the National Institute for Cultural Heritage, (right) view of the Bazaar in 2007, source: author	122
Figure 5-11 – (left) view of the bazaar after 1941, source: Technical Archive of the National Institute for Cultural Heritage, (right) view of the Bazaar 2022, source: author	124
Figure 5-12 First Plan for Tirana, 1923, Eshref Frashëri and aeral photo showing remaining of the grid.....	126
Figure 5-13 – Zoning Plan of Tirana 2007 – The delineation shows the border of Historic Centre – The colored buildings refer to the designated monuments. Different colors of the single buildings refer to different functions eg. administrative, residential etc	127
Figure 5-14 Zoning Plan of Tirana 2018 (yellow presence of historic fabric not included in the buffer zone and areas with red arrows show the pressure of the development and shrinking of the protected area boundary eg. red arrows show the shrinking of the boundary of historic centre (compared to the zoning plan 2007) leaving several areas in the buffer zone. ...	127
Figure 5-15 - Tirana city plan map 1917. Highlighted in a yellow circle the converging centre of the main roads at the edge of the existing city but what shall become the new proposed main administrative square in 1937. <i>Basemap source: Technical Archive – in (Aliaj et al., 2003), (Menghini et al., 2012), (Dhamo et al., 2016)</i>	129
Figure 5-16 - Tirana city plan 1937, this base map shows a critical moment when the	

initial approach of intervening while preserving the preexisting was changing to a more abrupt intervention like the extension of the main boulevard to the north through the existing urban tissue. Source of the base map: (Luarasi, 2022) the new proposed centre and the main monumental axis that extends both in south and north is depicted in yellow by the author of this study. 130

- Figure 5-17 - Plan for Tirana 1950 A socialist capital: Gani Strazimiri's study for Tirana, conceived at the Architectural Institute in Moscow, December 1950. AQSH. – source: (Mëhilli, 2017), the schematic depiction in yellow of the permanence of the monumental axis and main administrative square are made from the author of this study 131
- Figure 5-18 Peter Riemann with Oswald Mathias Ungers, "The City in the City" (1977) from "Pictures at an Exhibition" The City in the City: Berlin: A Green Archipelago 132
- Figure 5-19 - Location of selected historical building within their urban units in Tirana urban layout, Source:(Demaj et al., 2026)..... 133
- Figure 5-20 - Examples from the Layer Analysis undertaken in Task 1 – Layer 1, source:(Demaj et al., 2026) 137
- Figure 5-21 - Examples from the Layer Analysis undertaken in Task 1 – Layer 2-3-4, Source: (Plyku Demaj & Buka, 2024) 138
- Figure 5-22- Examples from the Layer Analysis undertaken during Task 1- Layer 4, Source:(Demaj et al., 2026) 138
- Figure 5-23 (right) – Final model Zone 6, (left) Final model, Zone 5, source:(Demaj et al., 2026) 139
- Figure 5-24 - Final model Zone 7, source: (Demaj et al., 2026) 139
- Figure 5-25- Final model Zone 4, source:(Demaj et al., 2026) 139
- Figure 5-26 - Diagrams showing the urban sprawl during 1925 - 1994. *Source:(Plyku Demaj & Buka, 2024)* 142
- Figure 5-27 - Epidamn boulevard during 1926, 1980 and today 142
- Figure 5-28 Vista of the city looking towards the venetian tower from one of the fortification towers highlighting in red the negative impacts of new high-rise buildings development (Angevin tower) photos dating back in 2010 (credits: Marsela Plyku Demaj) and in 2024 (credits: Iden Buka)..... 143
- Figure 5-29 - Vista of the city looking towards the Epidamn boulevard from one of the fortification towers highlighting in red the negative impacts of new high-rise buildings development (Angevin tower) photos dating back in 2010 (source Marsela Plyku Demaj) and in 2024 (source Iden Buka) 143
- Figure 5-30 - Images showing the destructions of the 1926 earthquake in the neighbourhood within the fortification walls, Durrës 146
- Figure 5-31 - Images showing the plan (left) and the zoning (right) of the regulatory plan of Durrës 1942, from L. Carmignani, F. Poggi. source National Archive of Constructions, cited in (Menghini et al., 2012) The Historic Neighbourhood within the fortification walls is highlighted in yellow by the author of this study while the newly renovated axis and the proposed central square at the edge of the historic ensemble are in depicted in red. 147
- Figure 5-32 Zoning plan of the archaeological area depicting Zone A (core zone) and Zone B (zone with archaeological potential), source: Decision of Council of Ministers No.396/2005 148
- Figure 5-33 - View of the agricultural landscape in the setting of the archaeological area, photo taken from the fortification walls, Photo credis: M.P.Demaj 2023, Source:(Demaj, 2024) 148
- Figure 5-34 – Part of the analysis on the view corridors and vistas at urban scale.

Source:(Demaj, 2024)	150
Figure 5-35 – Part of the Comparative analysis conducted on building typologies - architectural scale Source: (Demaj, 2024)	150
Figure 5-36 – Location of the selected case studies.	154
Figure 5-37 - (Left) Map of the Historic Centre after the inclusion of the Holy See (2009), (right) Historic Centre with the Buffer zone (2024), Source:(World Heritage Centre, 1980a).....	156
Figure 5-38 – View of the archaeological layers of Rome, photo of the author (2025)	157
Figure 5-39 - View of monumental fountains in Rome, photo of the author (2025 ...	157
Figure 5-40 – Criteria based on which Brugge is proclaimed World Heritage, Source: (The city council, 2012)	163
Figure 5-41 – Unesco Core Zone and Buffer Zone of Bruges, Source: (Vanhuele & Vanneste, 2025)	164
Figure 5-42 – Diagram of the historic growth of the Bruges through history. Source: (The city council, 2012)	165
Figure 5-43 – Map Showing the phases of urban expansion as well as different morphological areas based on developments in different historic periods.....	165
Figure 5-44 – Architectural Diversity – Examples of buildings based on different periods of construction. Source: Management Plan 2012.....	170
Figure 5-45 – Ile de la Cite before the Haussmann Plan (1855).....	177
Figure 5-46 – (Left) Map of the Historic Centre of Paris (1991), (right) Revised Map of the Historic Centre and Buffer zone of Paris (2024), Source: (World Heritage Centre, 1991).....	178
Figure 5-47 - Continuous façade block (their size varies between 140-1289 m). Source: (Jallon et al., 2017)	181
Figure 5-48 - Typical Parisian blocks. Source: (Jallon et al., 2017).....	181
Figure 5-49 – (from left to right) Building class 1, class 2 and class 3.....	181
Figure 5-50 – View of the city of Edinburgh, world heritage site.....	184
Figure 5-51 - (Left) Map of the Historic Centre of Edinburg specifying the conservation areas (2005), (right) Clarified Map of Historic Centre of Edinburgh (2024), Source: (World Heritage Centre, 1995).....	184
Figure 5-52 – The old town of Warsaw before (1935) and after the war destruction (1947), Source.....	187
Figure 5-53 - (Left) Map of the Historic Centre of Warsaw (1980), (right) Modification of the Map of Historic Centre of Warsaw, including proposal for buffer zone with clarification on areas that have spatial plan (2014), Source: (World Heritage Centre, 1980b).....	188
Figure 5-54 – View of the Old city of Dubrovnik. <i>Source: Unesco, authored by Bandarin F. (2005)</i>	190
Figure 5-55 – Historic Core, included in WH List in 1979, Source:(University of Zagreb, 2021)	191
Figure 5-56 – 1994 Extension of the Historic Core and designation of a Buffer zone (letters A-C show historic districts included in the WH Core). Source:(University of Zagreb, 2021).....	191
Figure 5-57 – 2018 Extension of the Buffer zone based on recommendation of the 2015 ICOMOS Mission Report. Numbers 1-6 show historic districts included in the buffer zone. Source:(University of Zagreb, 2021).....	191
Figure 5-58 – Dubrovnik, Ground Floor-Level layout of the city. Source of base map: Institute of Art History, Ivan Tenšek et al The East-West and South axes	

are highlighted by the author.	193
Figure 5-59 – Flow Chart of process of approval of the project 1. Sports- recreational centre with a golf course and tourist resorts Bosanka North and Bosanka South”	199
Figure 5-60 view of 1600 Vienna – source Benevolo (Benevolo, 1993).....	203
Figure 5-61 Examples of historic roof structures that are still preserved in the city (City of Vienna, 2021)	204
Figure 5-62 View of the Vienna City Expansion Zone, c. 1873, Source: Museum of Vienna author Gustav Veith	205
Figure 5-63 1910 Vienna – Diagram showing the expansion planning and zoning – the inner city area is exaggerated compared to the whole (Collins G., 1965)	206
Figure 5-64 plan of the Votive Church by Sitte – linking buildings G and H and creating plazas D and F. Source(Choay, 1970)	208
Figure 5-65 Falkestrasse project, 1983–88, Coop Himmelb(l)au, noted to be as the first deconstructivist construction in the world – it is roof extension whose steel/glass construction breaks through the cubature of the existing building	210
Figure 5-66 The HaasHaus, 1985–90, Hans Hollein, which, together with the neighbouring hotel conversion (also Hollein), offers a contrasting architectural counterpart to St.Stephen’s Cathedral. The building is listed since 2012. Photo credit (above) Petr Šmídek, 2008.....	210
Figure 5-67 Zoning plan showing the Historic Centre and Buffer zone of Vienna (City of Vienna, 2021) as well as location of the projects 1.Haas Haus, 2. Falkestrase, 3.Hotel Intercontinental / Heumarkt and 4. Wien Mitte Project	211
Figure 5-68 World Heritage property – 1: Historic Centre 1999, 2: Schloss Eggenberg extension 2010, 3: buffer zone (source: Management Plan 2013)....	216
Figure 5-69 Traditional roofs Graz 1960s (left) and Traditional roofs before the project (right)	217
Figure 5-70 Graz, awarded project of the architects Nieto/Sobejano and project change after negotiation with UNESCO and ICOMOS	217
Figure 5-71 Urban expansion due to immigration of rural masses to London (Benevolo, 1968)	218
Figure 5-72 Dr. John Snow 1854 map aimed to identify causes of expansion of deaths from Cholera source: (Hall, 2014)	218
Figure 5-73 The Shard (Renzo Piano, 2012) – The project is not in the historic core directly but towering over the old city setting. It raised discussions about skyline and historic legibility	220

List of Tables

Table 1-1 – Distribution of designated cultural heritage monuments and sites based geographical regions in Albania. Source: Analysis of the author based on the official national list of cultural heritage monuments and sites. (Albania, 2025a) Highlighted in yellow distribution of Historic Urban / Rural Centres and Ensembles together with protected zones.	3
Table 1-2 Distribution of designated historic urban and rural settlements in Albania based on type of designation vs years	4
Table 3-1 – Explanation of the scheme in Figure 3-1Figure 3-1 – Scheme showing relation between OUV – Attributes and the role of Buffer zones in the protection of Attributes that convey the OUV	74
Table 3-2 List of proclaimed historic centres in Albania grouped as urban and rural settlements,	89
Table 4-1 – Relationship between the Modes of Intervention (analyzed in Chapter 2 and the Types of Surroundings / Buffer zones	97
Table 5-1 Connection of each case study with the identified buffer area conceptual typologies.	107
Table 5-2 Critical policy demands from the World Heritage Committee and the status of compliance.	117
Table 5-3 The selected historical buildings for the field study, Source:(Demaj et al., 2026)	135
Table 5-4- Identification of case study zones in three historical periods, source:(Demaj et al., 2026)	136
Table 5-5 - Chronology of the designations of the historic and cultural values of the city	144
Table 5-6 Connection of each case study with the identified buffer area conceptual typologies.	154
Table 6-1- Comparative Analysis of case studies and precedents based on regulatory and design indicators	229

List of Abbreviations

CIAM	CIAM (Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne) founded in Switzerland in 1928, was an avant-garde association of architects intended to advance both modernism and internationalism in architecture. CIAM saw itself as an elite group revolutionizing architecture to serve the interests of society. Its members included some of the best-known architects of the twentieth century, such as Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius, and Richard Neutra, but also hundreds of others who looked to it for doctrines on how to shape the urban environment in a rapidly changing world. (Munford, 2000)
DCM	Decision of Council of Ministers
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
ICCROM	International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
ICCROM	International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
GUP	General Urban Plan
IMK	Institute of Cultural Monuments (Former name of the National Institute for Cultural Heritage, Albania)
IKTK	National Institute for Cultural Heritage, Albania
IMP	Integrated Management Plan
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
HIA	Heritage Impact Assessment
HUL	Historic Urban Landscape
KKT	National Council of Territory, Albania
KKTKM	National Council of Tangible Cultural Heritage, Albania
LDP	Local Development Plan (Edinburgh, Scotland)
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OG	Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention
OUV	Outstanding Universal Value

PAAD	Sustainable Development and Planning Project (PARIS)
PLU	Paris Local Urban Plan
PRG	General Urban Plan (Rome, Italy)
SHEP	Scottish Historic Environment Policy
SPP	Scottish Planning Policy
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific Cultural Organization
WHL	World Heritage List
WHC	World Heritage Convention
WH	World Heritage
WW	World War

Chapter 1

Why Buffer Zone?

Introduction, Problem Statement,

Research Question and Methodology

This chapter gives an overview of the research context, motivation and problem statement. Before explaining research objectives and research question, the answer to *Why am I studying the Buffer Zones* is brought up. At the end of the chapter, the methodology used and the work structure is provided.

1.1 Introduction

This research stems from two decades of professional engagement in architectural and urban preservation, including the preservation and management of World Heritage historic centres in Albania. Along practice in conservation and restoration, it was while dealing with processes of designation, zoning, and protection for these historic cities, that a significant gap has become evident: the historic city is rarely conceived as a holistic system. Instead, its historic core (designated as “historic centre”) is consistently treated in isolation from its immediate and wider context, even though in many cases, part of this context is formally designated as a “*protective zone*” or “*buffer zone*.”

Albania is a small country with a very rich history and dense presence of historic and cultural heritage. As per its legal protection and preservation, despite several token legal acts during the Ottoman rule (end of 19th cent) and the short-lived monarchy of the early 20th century, no real developments occurred up to the end of World War II in the field of heritage preservation (Orhani, 2016). The first effective legislative act related to cultural heritage, was adopted in 1948 (Albania, 1948) together with the first national list of monuments, while the first legal protection of urban sites was enacted in 1961 (Albania, 1961b). In Albania, cultural heritage assets are grouped based on genres either as archaeological sites, built heritage or works of art. They are designated as single monuments or as sites being these either archaeological sites or ensembles of vernacular architecture built in urban or rural context. As per 2025, the National List of Cultural Heritage Assets includes about 2,342 monuments and sites. (see Table 1-1 below).

As shown in Table 1-1, there are 22 legally designated historic centres today in Albania designated as “Historic centres” or “Historic Urban Ensembles” out of which 13 are urban settlements¹ and 9 are rural settlements. Among these 2 (two) urban settlements and one rural settlement, namely cities of Berat and Gjirokastra as well as Lin Village retain a World Heritage status. Table 1-2 presents the chronological distribution of designated historical urban and rural settlements in Albania. It is clear from the table that urban settlements were the first to be designated as historic centres, with nearly half of the current total receiving this designation between 1960 and 1980. The period between 1980-2000 is a blank period regarding designation of historic centres due also to the political and economic transition of Albania from a communist regime towards an open market economy in 1990.

¹ Museum Cities of Berat, Gjirokastra, Kruja, underground of Durrës (1961), Historic centres of Elbasan, Korça, Shkodra (1980s), Voskopoja (2003), Tirana (2007), Himara (2016), Përmet (2015), Pogradec (2015), Bilisht (2015), Konispol (2025). Source: National List of Cultural Heritage Assets, (2025a). <https://iktk.gov.al/pasuri-kulturore/>

Table 1-1 – Distribution of designated cultural heritage monuments and sites based geographical regions in Albania. Source: Analysis of the author based on the official national list of cultural heritage monuments and sites. (Albania, 2025a) Highlighted in yellow distribution of Historic Urban / Rural Centres and Ensembles together with protected zones.

	Regions	Berat	Gjirokaštër	Dibër	Durrës	Tiranë	Fier	Vlorë	Elbasan	Korçë	Kukës	Lezhë	Shkodër	Tot
Genres														
11 - Archaeology - Settlements	7	2	5	0	1	3	6	5	7	2	1	2		41
12 - Archaeology - Fortification - Castle / Fort	13	24	7	6	12	9	44	31	28	10	5	19		208
13 - Archaeology - Religious	2	5	1	4	2	2	13	7	4	0	6	7		53
14 - Archaeology - Socio-cultural constructions	0	1	0	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0		6
15 - Archaeology - Engineering / Infrastructure constructions	2	2	1	9	1	0	2	1	0	0	1	2		21
16 - Archaeology - Sepulcral	0	2	0	2	0	3	2	3	2	0	0	1		15
17 - Archaeological Zones	1	1	0	3	2	2	5	1	1	0	2	3		21
18 - Archaeology - Vernacular	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		1
22 - Built - Religious Architecture	30	48	6	3	7	13	38	10	35	2	5	3		200
23 - Built - Engineering Works	11	40	5	7	8	4	20	17	16	1	3	7		139
24 - Built - Monumental Tombs (Sepulcral Architecture)	2	1	0	0	3	0	1	0	1	1	0	1		10
25 - Built - Vernacular Architecture	422	410	39	18	21	9	76	47	71	22	11	49		1195
26 - Built - Designed Architecture	1	5	1	1	201	0	14	9	1	2	1	8		244
27 - Built - Historic Urban / Rural Centres / Ensembles	1	3	1	0	2	0	6	1	6	0	0	2		22
27 - Built - Protected Zones (single monuments and ensembles)	13	32	4	7	18	8	40	9	36	2	8	12		189
28 - Built - Open Spaces, Places, Plazzas	0	1	1	0	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	2		9
31 - Art Works - Movable assets	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0		4
32 - Art Works - Immovable Assets	1	4	0	4	1	2	5	0	4	0	1	55		77
TOTAL	506	579	69	67	281	55	267	143	208	42	44	171		2432

While urban settlements regained attention after 2000, it is important to notice designation of 9 (nine) rural settlements² (as historic centres and ensembles) in the last decade. Again, after year 2000, World Heritage status was achieved from 3 (three) historic ensembles being Historic centres of Berat and Gjirokastra (2005 for Gjirokastra and 2008 as a serial property³) and the Village of Lin (2019 as part of the transboundary World heritage property of Lake Ohrid Region)⁴.

The concept of buffer zones in the Albanian legal framework for cultural heritage, although not explicitly referred to by this term, can be traced back to the first effective legal document on cultural heritage adopted in Albania in 1948⁵. From the establishment of the communist

² Historic centres of Vuno village (2016), Qeparo village, Dhërmi village (2016), Bënjë village (2021), Rabdisht village, Theth village (2017), Rehova village (2017), Kanina village (2020, Lin village (2025), Source: ibid

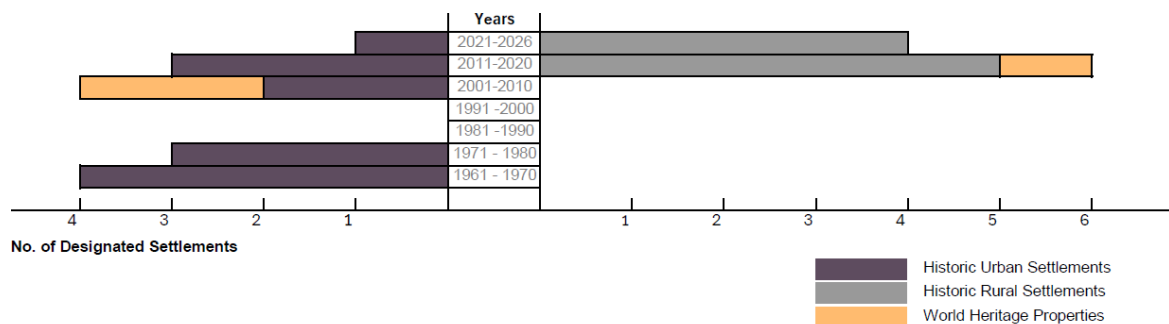
³ UNESCO uses the term "property" for World Heritage to align with legal, administrative, and technical definitions in the 1972 Convention. It signifies that specific cultural or natural sites possess Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) requiring international protection, treating them as identifiable assets of humanity that are conserved, managed, and inscribed on the World Heritage List.

⁴ Lake Ohrid Region is a transboundary World Heritage property shared between Albania and North Macedonia.

⁵ Decision 16.10.1948 "On the proclamation of the first list of monuments put under state protection", (1948).

regime (1945) through the 1980s, efforts to preserve Albania's built heritage were conducted under a highly centralized system of state control.

Table 1-2 Distribution of designated historic urban and rural settlements in Albania based on type of designation vs years ⁶



Decree-Law No. 586, On the Protection of Cultural Monuments and Rare Natural Items”, issued in 1948, introduced main principles on designation, research, restoration of cultural monuments. It also adopted the first official national list of cultural heritage monuments, with 107 single monuments in four main categories: (1) castles and ancient settlements, (2) churches and monasteries, (3) bridges, aqueducts and caves, and finally, (4) monuments of Islamic faith. (Riza, 2002) Most monuments in this list especially the genres of fortifications and religious buildings, were designated by including a specific surrounding area sometimes referring to the map, geographical and morphological features (ex. elevation, river, roads, etc) and sometimes as a fixed distance of ex. 5-10 m from the monument. Even though it was not specified as a separate zone but considered part of the delineation of the monument itself, it constitutes the earliest appearance of designation of monuments and their immediate surroundings in the national context of Albania.

The first formal mention of the *protective area* is linked with the first legal protection of urban sites enacted in 1961, when the first urban sites being historic ensembles of Berat and Gjirokastra, as well as the Bazaar of Kruja and the underground of Durrës. were placed under state protection and designated as "museum cities". As Riza (2002) and Meksi (2004) note, these developments predated the Venice charter by roughly three years. The regulation of the Museum city of Berat (Albania, 1961a), constitutes the first legal act on the protection of an urban ensemble and remained as a reference for the other three museum cities for about 10 years up until their respective regulations were developed. Strazimiri (1971) and Papa (1972b, 1972/3) stress that these first legal acts formed the foundation basis for the protection

⁶ Each designated site is mentioned in the table only once, the first time of its designation, regardless of the different amendments each proclamation decision might have had. Source: 1.ibid

and preservation of cultural heritage in the following years.

The Regulation for the protection and administration of the museum city of Berat marks the first depiction and explanation of the “*protective zone*” as a specific area in the zoning map.(see Figure 1-1) In the case of Berat, in 1961⁷, the *protective area*, constituted a delineated area at the east of the museum city, morphologically part of the historic expansion of the lower city along the valley of the river Osum, and also area where a new modern centre has developed, east of the ancient fortified core.(see Figure 1-1).

Due to the presence of individual monuments, the regulation established that the regulatory urban plan and new interventions in this area should be preceded by technical studies and should focus on highlighting the values of the monuments present in the area and of the adjacent museum city rather than negatively impacting them.⁸



Figure 1-1 Zoning map of Berat museum city, 1961, source: Technical Archive of the National Institute for Cultural Heritage. The map depicts Musum area and Protective area, while the author of this research has marked also the area of projected extension of the modern centre at the western edge of the Museum area.

⁷ Decision No.170 "On the approval of the regulation and administration of the Museum City of Berat", (1961a). , Decision No.172 "On the proclamation of museum cities", (1961b).

⁸ Article 12 of DCM No.170, 1961

According to the current Law No. 27(2018) “On Cultural Heritage and Museums” of the Republic of Albania, the concept that corresponds to what internationally is often called a *buffer zone* or *protective zone* is defined as follows:

“Buffer zone” (zona mbrojtëse)⁹ is a territory with clearly delineated boundaries located outside the historic centre, architectural/urban ensemble, architectural complex or cultural monument, the purpose of which is protecting the values of such cultural heritage and ensuring lighting, perspective, cultural landscape, visibility, enjoyment and public use.”¹⁰

In current national practice, delineated buffer / protective zones are established around historic centres, immovable cultural assets, archaeological zones, and other listed heritage categories, and interventions within these zones become subject to limitations on height, façade color, shape and/or roofing. They are subject to special review and approval procedures to ensure protection of heritage (historic core).

The “buffer zone” (or protective surroundings) around historic centres or single monuments is used in many European heritage systems to protect the setting, visual integrity, and cultural context of a heritage property¹¹. While each country may implement it differently in national cultural-heritage legislation, considering that this term is widely used in the framework of the UNESCO World Heritage system its definition in the framework of World heritage sites may be considered as an overarching global definition. The above definition in the Albanian legislation, is in line with the current UNESCO definition of buffer zones in the context of World Heritage Convention. As stated in the Operational Guidelines (paragraph 104), adopted by World Heritage Committee (2025):

“... a buffer zone is an area surrounding the nominated property which has complementary legal and/or customary restrictions placed on its use and development in order to give an added layer of protection to the property. This should include the immediate setting of the nominated property, important views and other areas or attributes that are functionally important as a support to the property and its protection. The area constituting the buffer zone should be determined in each case through appropriate mechanisms. Details on the size, characteristics and authorized uses of a buffer zone, as well as a map indicating

⁹ Albanian: literally meaning “protective zone” (note of the author)

¹⁰ Source: Article 5, point 67 of the Law 27/2028

¹¹ The normative and practical application of the buffer zone concept in European heritage systems is going to be explained in section 3.1

the precise boundaries of the property and its buffer zone, should be provided in the nomination.”

Considering that in Albania, awareness on urban historic cities and their surroundings effectively emerged after the WWII, a question is raised on *when did the awareness on urban space of historic cities and their surroundings/context emerge at global level?*

In her book “*The invention of the historic monument*”, Françoise Choay (2001a) notes that monographs on cities up to and including 19th century do not address urban heritage as physical space; instead, they describe cities through important single monuments, whose significance varies on the author’s perspective and the historic context. This tendency is grasped from what Sitte ironically observed in 1889: that modern histories of art discuss every insignificant detail yet give no attention to city planning. (Collins G., 1965) Historical studies up to the mid-20th-century follow a similar pattern, examining cities primarily through their judicial and religious institutions and their economic and social structures. When dealing with modern city planning, while referring to 19th cent. studies on cities, again Choay (2001) p.120 highlights that ***space was their great lacunae***. She also notes that between WWII and 1980s “*one could still count by hand the number of historians and art historians who had worked on urban space*”.

The disruption of traditional environments and transformation of urban space produced by the Industrial revolution, triggered the transformation of the physical city into an object of historic knowledge. Introduction of new circulation modes and new cadastral scales were main elements of this transformation (Choay 2001), (Hall, 2014), (Angélil & Siress, 2012), (Roberts, 2015). It was through comparison that historic cities became objects of investigation. Pugin’s (1898) lexicon “*Contrasts*” is among earliest examples of studies that put urban settlements in historical perspective and studied them using the same criteria applied to contemporary urban formations. Anticipating later approaches in urban history and morphology, Pugin provided paired visual juxtapositions between medieval urban ensembles and industrializing 19th century urban units, (see Figure 1-2 and Figure 1-3).

Advances in urban studies in Europe at the late 19th century and during the 20th century such as Pugin (1898), Sitte (1945), Giovannoni (1931) Rossi (1982) eventually influenced the emergence of a genuine history of historic urban space, as well as the emergence of numerous studies on the urban morphology, an interdisciplinary field developed in the 1950s by three main schools in England, Italy and France and grounded on the influential work of notorious morphologists, M.R.G. Conzen and Saverio Muratori. (Moudon, 2019). However, even though the work of early scholars provided grounds to the creation of the new discipline that Cerdà would call urbanism, Choay (2001b) states that the history of

doctrines of urbanism and their concrete applications does not coincide with the invention of the urban historic heritage and its protection.

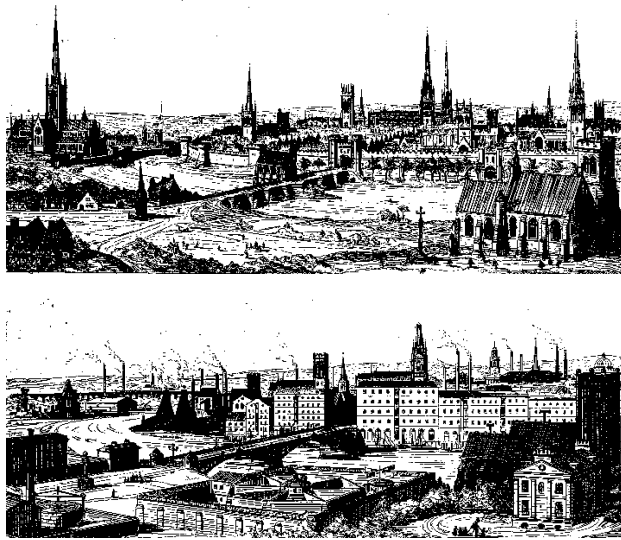


Figure 1-2 Contrasting a 14th century city (above) with the same city during the 19th century (below), Source: (Pugin, 1898)

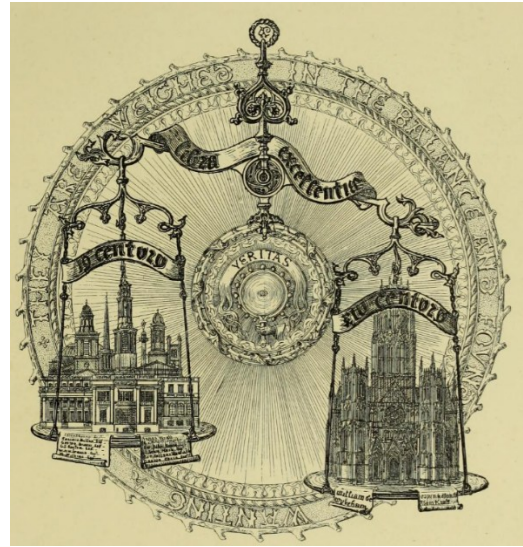


Figure 1-3 illustration showing a comparison by putting in balance the 14th century city and 19th century city (Pugin, 1898)

Both the history of urbanism and that of urban heritage conservation proceed in two seemingly separate, yet interdependent timelines. In the dialectic between new development and historic urban setting, **two main tendencies of engagement with the historic preexisting city** are observed:

1. **Integration** of new developments within preexisting historic built environment.
2. **Erasure** of preexisting-built environment by introducing new developments.

Whether, and at what scale, the urbanism had the tendency to erase the preexisting-built environment or strived to preserve it, depends on whether the preexisting-built environment is seen as an obstacle towards the development of new needed modalities of organizing urban space.

Engagement with the historic city, thus, preceded the emergence of the normative concept of surroundings and eventually that of buffer zone. On the normative viewpoint, within the World Heritage framework, the formal emergence of the "buffer zone" was an evolutionary process rather than a single point of origin. Although the 1972 World Heritage Convention, contains no mention of the term, the necessity of protecting a site's surroundings was recognized in the very first Operational Guidelines in 1977. At this early stage, it focused

primarily on natural properties and was included as recommendation to state parties¹² that when setting the boundary of a property to be nominated as World Heritage, “*to consider the indication of the buffer zone around the property itself (i.e. the natural or man-made surroundings that influence the physical state of the property or the way in which the property is perceived)*”¹³. The specific nomenclature “buffer zone” was officially integrated into the World Heritage lexicon during the 1980 revision of the Operational Guidelines¹⁴. This update expanded the concept to encompass both natural and cultural properties, acknowledging that the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of a historic monument or site could be compromised by developments in its immediate setting. The logic for this spatial tool was largely borrowed from the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme, which had been utilizing “buffer zones” since 1974 to create protective rings around core biological reserves. For much of the late 20th century, however, the delineation of these zones remained a recommendation rather than a strict requirement.

This changed significantly following the 2005 revision of the Operational Guidelines, influenced heavily by the Xi’an Declaration¹⁵, a specialized doctrinal text that highlighted the essential role “setting” plays in the overall significance of cultural heritage. Acting as a supporting guideline, it had particular influence on conservation approaches, establishment of the buffer zone normative as well as on the management of both tangible and intangible settings (Bandarin & Oers, 2012; Liang et al., 2023; Lu, 2014).

This development transformed the *buffer zone* from an optional management tool into a mandatory component of the nomination dossier for world heritage status. Today, any State Party¹⁶ proposing a new site must delineate a *buffer zone* stating its role to the protection of the historic core or provide a robust technical justification for its absence.

¹² In the UNESCO framework, States Parties are countries that have formally adhered to specific international conventions, treaties, or agreements adopted by UNESCO. By ratifying, accepting, approving these instruments, these countries become legally bound by their provisions and agree to implement their objectives.

¹³ Article 25 point 2 of the Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention 1977.

¹⁴ Article 11 of the revised Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World heritage Convention 1980.

¹⁵ The Xi’an Declaration was adopted in 2005 during the 15th ICOMOS General Assembly, as result of the International Scientific Symposium with the theme “*Monuments and Sites in their Setting: Conserving Cultural Heritage in Changing Townscapes and Landscapes*”.

¹⁶ In UNESCO terminology, a State Party is a country that has officially ratified, accepted, approved, or acceded to a specific UNESCO convention or treaty, binding itself to its terms.

1.2 Problem statement

Apart from serving as protective zones for designated historic centres, buffer areas remain integral part of the urban fabric and are therefore subject to urban spatial planning policies and statutory regulation. As such, they inevitably operate at the intersection of two regulatory and conceptual domains: heritage conservation and urban development. Therefore, it is necessary to consider challenges encountered in both these domains to grasp the character of these areas.

Two of the defining experiences of Albanians in the last 30 years have been the opening of the economy to the private sector and the spatial displacement of the population. The rapid transition to a market economy radically altered the administration and territorial control exercised by the state and relevant institutions including those responsible for legislation, planning, construction, and cultural heritage preservation. The pace of development outstripped the capacity of these institutions, resulting in significant degradation of both urban and natural landscapes. Unprecedented urban developments in Tirana (capital city) and the challenges associated with it during this period provide a vivid illustration of these issues (Aliaj, 2010). Dhamo et al (2019) argue that after the 45-year totalitarian rule the existing architecture and urbanism was a spatial reflection of the political repression. This explains the “harsh” treatment of urban space following the regime’s collapse, visible in the wave of informal urbanism in major cities, especially visible within or in the surroundings of historic centres.

Several factors contributed to these challenges. First existing cultural heritage legislation and urban planning regulations, developed under a 45-year totalitarian regime, were insufficient to address the highly dynamic and emergent demands of the post-1990 period. This legal vacuum weakened the territorial control of both central and local cultural heritage authorities, allowing demographic pressures and unregulated development to prevail. Tirana and other major cities went through a prolonged period of informal urban expansion, characterized by the simultaneous presence of abandonment and uncontrolled growth. This process led to the occupation of public spaces, the emergence of dense high-rise developments in city centres and informal neighbourhoods, and the formation of new urban areas. These areas were described by Dhamo (2009) as a “spontaneous city” surrounding the established urban core, often struggling with basic infrastructure (Dhamo et al., 2019), (Aliaj, 2010) (Demaj et al., 2024).

These phenomena, to some extent, have been present also in territories within or close to historic urban centres, identified still today in the form of illegal buildings remaining from this period. The central government was clearly unable to manage the rapid expansion of cities

during the 1990s (Velo, 2008). Even though decentralisation started to some extent since after the '90s, with the territorial reform in 2014, most responsibilities for urban planning and territorial management have been formally transferred to local governments, most of which have faced difficulties with lack of the human and financial resources needed to meet all the challenges. While the preservation and protection of cultural heritage sites and historic areas fall under the authority of the central government, the main responsibilities for territorial management including the regulation and control of urban development lie with local governments. However, in the case of the buffer zones of historic centres, the division of responsibilities between central and local authorities remains insufficiently defined, often rigid and unclear leading to overlaps in competencies (Demaj et al., 2024).

Several issues that resonate with challenges of city growth come into discussion,¹⁷ when dealing with heritage cities in Albania, such as:

- *Impacts caused by real estate development and tourism pressure,*
- *The presence of illegal and uncontrolled development (after the '90s)*
- *Incompatible architectural design on new buildings.*
- *Overlap of different protection competences on the historic centre between central and local level,*
- *Unclear Management systems / Lack of Management plan*

While the designation of a *buffer zone* is perceived as a normative process, demanding different approaches of intervention within and out of a border line in the map, **it often imposes rigid, formal edges onto a living city.**

In the Albanian context, this has led to several critical problems that are present in most historic centres, as below:

1. Mummification: The isolation of the historic core from the contemporary city (Demaj et al., 2026).
2. Fabric Disruption: An interruption of the urban fabric at the border line, often resulting in negative visual and spatial impacts (Demaj & Çuku, 2022).
3. Loss of Cohesion: A lack of unity and "wholeness" of the architectural and urban character across the designated borders (Demaj et al., 2024).

¹⁷ Albania, S. P. (2025). *State of Conservation Reports of World Heritage sites "Historic centres of Gjirokastra and Berat"*. whc.unesco.org/en/soc/4742 Albania. (2025b). *State of Conservation Reports of World Heritage sites "Historic centres of Gjirokastra and Berat"*. Retrieved from whc.unesco.org/en/soc/4742

While in Albania the above-listed problems arise both within designated buffer zones and in the undesignated surroundings of cultural heritage sites, such challenges are not unique to the Albanian context. Similar tensions reflect broader contemporary struggles to reconcile heritage conservation with urban development across Europe and globally, (Bandarin & Oers, 2012; Koylowski & Peterson, 2005; Mousavi & Hosseininiasab, 2023; Vanhuele & Vanneste, 2025).

The transition of the concept from a protective "filter" to a mandatory administrative boundary (in the UNESCO framework) mirrors the challenges identified in Albania: the shift from a lived-in setting to a rigid "line on a map" that often struggles to balance preservation with the organic growth of the contemporary city. Mileto & Vegas (2023) highlight this in their study of Valencia, Spain, emphasizing the complexity of protecting the "surroundings" of historic cities where the boundary often acts as a barrier rather than a transition.

Similar challenges such as the lack of alignment between cultural heritage policies and urban planning documents are noted at global context, by: Juma and Turner (2019), Petrescu (2023), Mousavi & Hosseininiasab (2023), Lv et al. (2022), as well as Unesco reports dedicated to buffer zones¹⁸. They note that even though buffer zones play an essential role in protecting the values of core zones, yet due to the implementation of legislative limitations and local construction regulations, they suffer from a decline in urban growth resulting in underutilized or neglected spaces that often sit right on the edge of protected cores. Also Zhang et al. (2022) mentions that in practice, especially in the early years when buffer zones were introduced as tools for protection and management of historic centres, they were created quite arbitrarily, becoming empty shells instead of useful tools. Recommendations such as treating the setting not as a secondary support zone but as an inseparable part of a property's character, advocating for "preservation by development" strategies that use heritage values as a proactive starting point for urban growth rather than a barrier to it are supported and encouraged in many sources (Bandarin & Oers, 2012; D'Auria & Di Ruocco, 2022; Jokilehto, 2010; Koylowski & Peterson, 2005; Mousavi & Hosseininiasab, 2023; Organisation, 2008; Pereira Roders, 2019; UNESCO World Heritage, 2007).

Importantly, these issues are not limited to the present. Historical reflections reveal that comparable concerns were already being articulated in earlier periods. For instance, during the interwar period in Italy, Lazzari (1942) questioned the implications of rigid normative frameworks regulating the surroundings of historic architecture. He asked: *"How could a new architecture, arising beside an old one, be a good*

¹⁸ 2008 report on buffer zones following the Unesco Expert Meeting in Davos

architecture under normative constraints of proportional relationships, predetermined dimensions, and chromatic tonality?” This reflection highlights an enduring debate regarding the limitations that prescriptive, one-size-fits-all regulations may impose on architectural design in historic contexts.

In conclusion, studies in both the European context as well as global context suggest that failing to integrate surroundings or buffer areas leads to the very "mummification" of the historic core and lack of unity, problem identified also in the Albanian context.

1.3 Why Buffer zones?

Considering the legislative aspect (in section 1.1), the immediate surroundings delineated as buffer zones of historic cities are considered significant conservation areas for preserving the integrity of the historic cities. As such, from the normative point of view, interventions and development on these areas, are subject to limitations and specific review procedures.

However, they seem to be considered as “passive” urban spaces that should only function to protect the visual and spatial integrity of the historic core. As observed from the identified problems, (presented in section 1.2, identified in Albania and echoed in similar studies in Europe and globally) this normative vision of buffer zones does not always comply with the reality.

Due to necessary restrictions introduced by the national and international legislation for cultural heritage, today these historic settlements and their buffer zones in Albania face the issue of constant, rapid change of urban functions and slower changing urban form. The need for restrictions and specific regulations in the administration of land, buildings and wider territory within heritage designated historic areas is generally accepted at local level due to the high public awareness for the protection of cultural and historic values. On the contrary, determining development conditions in buffer zones of these historic sites may become object of concern locally, due to potential conflicts it may arise between the existing urban legislation, cultural heritage legislation and development and tourism pressures. The form / function dilemma is a universal condition of the urban problem. Brand (1995), highlights a universal truth that all buildings grow. Yet he is right also when he states that this fact is not acknowledged due to its being embarrassing or illegal. In addition to that, it can be easily accepted that all cities grow. Most grow even when they're not allowed to.

On the other hand, theoretically, based on the framework introduced by Koolhaas (2004), buffer zones are not merely passive edges, but critical intermediate fields where the future of history is actively negotiated. **They intermediate between existing (historic core) and future (potential) historic sites (the immediate setting designated as Buffer zone).** **This perspective transforms the buffer zone from a protective void into a site of**

prospective preservation, where the city must decide in advance what it will build for posterity.

This significance is heightened by the fact that the interval between the present and what is deemed "historic" has collapsed dramatically, shrinking from thousands of years to mere decades or even the moment of a building's completion. **Consequently, new developments in the immediate setting of an old core, such as Ring Strasse in Vienna (19th century) or the monumental boulevard in Tirana, Albania (1930s-1940s) are rapidly "overtaken" by preservation.**¹⁹ By applying a logic similar to Koolhaas's "bar code" model, where bands of the city are either preserved or systematically replaced, the buffer zone becomes the territory where stability and instability confront one another. Conceptually it is the primary stage for a prospective architectural repertoire, acting as the essential transition where the "new" is strategically positioned to become the historic core of tomorrow (Koolhaas, 2004).

The terms "old" and "new" used in this research are not strictly related to chronological time but are instead understood in spatial and conceptual terms. In this sense, "new" refers to development interventions proposed within or in the immediate setting of an existing historic core, regardless of the period in which they are introduced or the existence of regulatory frameworks for the protection of the surrounding areas. This interpretation draws from the influential theoretical approach of Gustavo Giovannoni (2025), who used the relationship between the "old" and the "new" to address the challenges posed by modern construction within historic cities. Rather than advocating for rigid separation, Giovannoni emphasized the need for a balanced and contextual relationship between historic urban fabrics and contemporary interventions.

Building on this conceptual perspective, the relationship between "old" and "new" provides a useful theoretical framework for interpreting spatial interactions between historic cores and their surrounding urban environments. **Within this framework, buffer zones can be understood not only as regulatory perimeters but also as transitional areas that mediate the coexistence of historic urban fabric and contemporary development pressures.** This perspective allows the differentiation of several **conceptual types of buffer zones**, reflecting varying geomorphological character, spatial continuity and functional interaction between historic areas (the "old") and their surroundings (the "new").

¹⁹ Cases like Ring Strasse in Vienna or the early 20th century developments in Tirana Albania demonstrate that while at the time of construction both were introduced as new developments in the setting of an historic site, in the course of a century they have gained the heritage status in their own right as testimony of an urban development true to their time.

Building from the theoretical view **based on various modes of intervention between the “Old” and the “New”**, four conceptual types of *buffer zones or surroundings* are identified in the Albanian context:

Type 1 – Historic Accretion

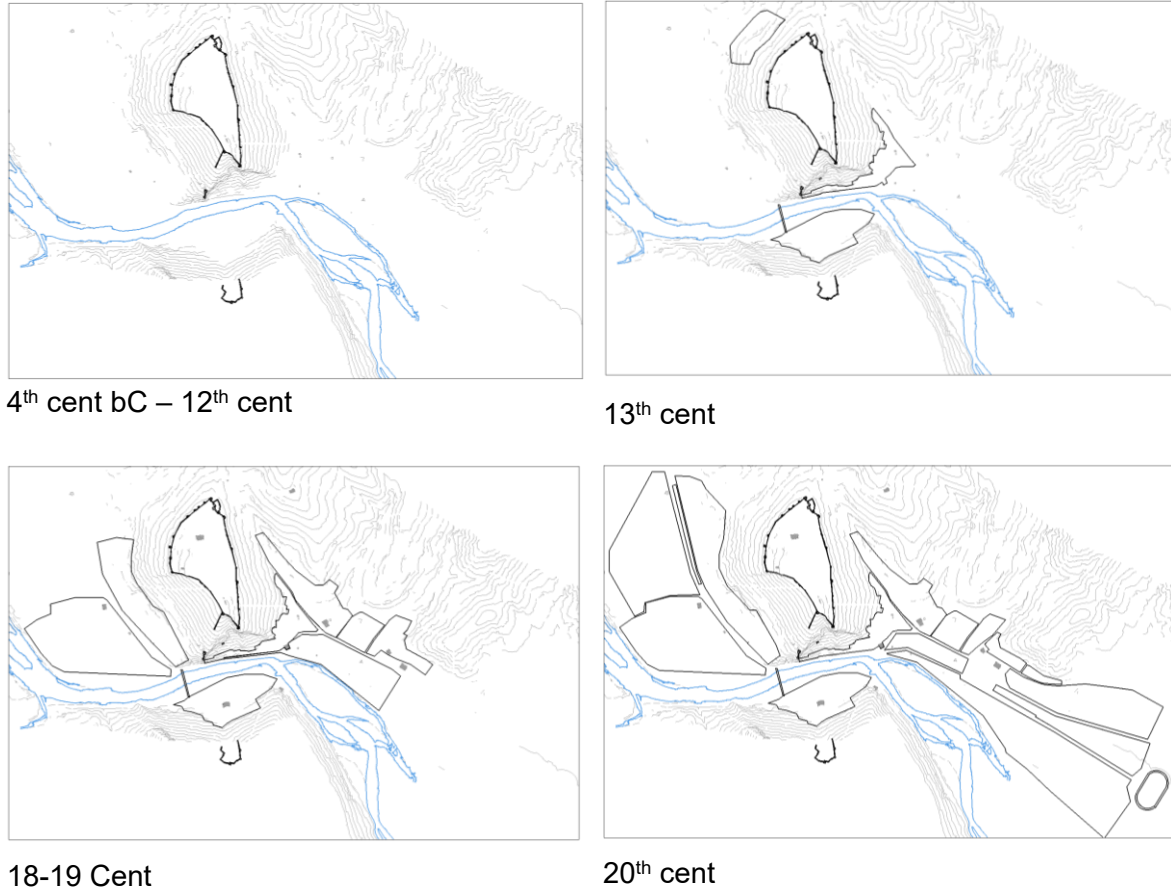


Figure 1-4 – Diagram of the Historic Accretion of the Historic Centre of Berat (world heritage site), a hill town that has had an uninterrupted urban life since 4th Cent.bC

In this type, the buffer zone emerges as the result of the historical expansion of the historic core. Within the conceptual framework of the relationship between “old” and “new,” the buffer zone represents the “new,” understood as the historic urban growth that gradually developed around the “old” core. Rather than constituting a sharp spatial break, this type of buffer zone reflects a process of organic and incremental urban development in which successive layers of the city are formed over time. Because this expansion generally occurs in a gradual and adaptive manner, the historic core typically maintains its role as the gravitational centre of the urban settlement. In spatial and functional terms, the historic core exerts a centripetal influence on the surrounding urban fabric, shaping the morphology, street structure, and socio-economic orientation of the adjacent areas that constitute the buffer zone.

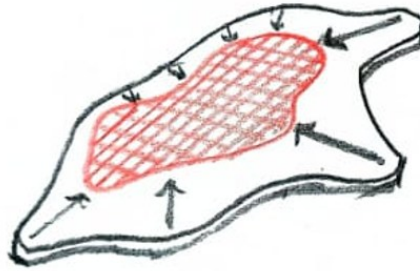


Figure 1-5 – Diagram showing the centripetal force that the Historic Core (in red) exercises to its immediate surroundings

Several historic centres in the Albanian context correspond to this typology. Among the most prominent examples are the historic centres of Berat and Gjirokastër, which are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Other cities such as Krujë, Korçë, and Elbasan also reflect this pattern, where historic centres of national cultural significance are surrounded by urban areas that historically evolved as their immediate spatial extensions.

Type 2 – Projected Expansion

In this type, the buffer zone is conceived as a projected urban extension located at the edge of the historic core. Within the conceptual framework of the relationship between “old” and “new,” the buffer zone represents the “new” as a planned or anticipated urban development **within the “old” or in spatial proximity to the “old.”** Unlike the first typology, where the buffer zone emerges through gradual historical expansion, this type reflects a planning approach in which the surrounding area is deliberately structured to accommodate contemporary urban growth. In this case a centrifugal force towards the “new” development may cause either the creation of a new gravitational zone (a new centre) or the movement of the gravitational centre from the historic core towards the new development. In some cases such as the post-war regularization interventions (Patte plan and Hausmann plan for 19th cent. Paris, mid 19th cent. piecemeal interventions in London, sanitation interventions in post-war Italian cities etc) such planned interventions may occur within the historic core making the relation between “old” and “new” more complex.

Several cases in the Albanian context correspond to this typology. These include the historic centres of Tirana and Durrës, where areas adjacent to the historic core have been conceptualized in the early 20th century as planned extensions intended to structure contemporary urban growth.

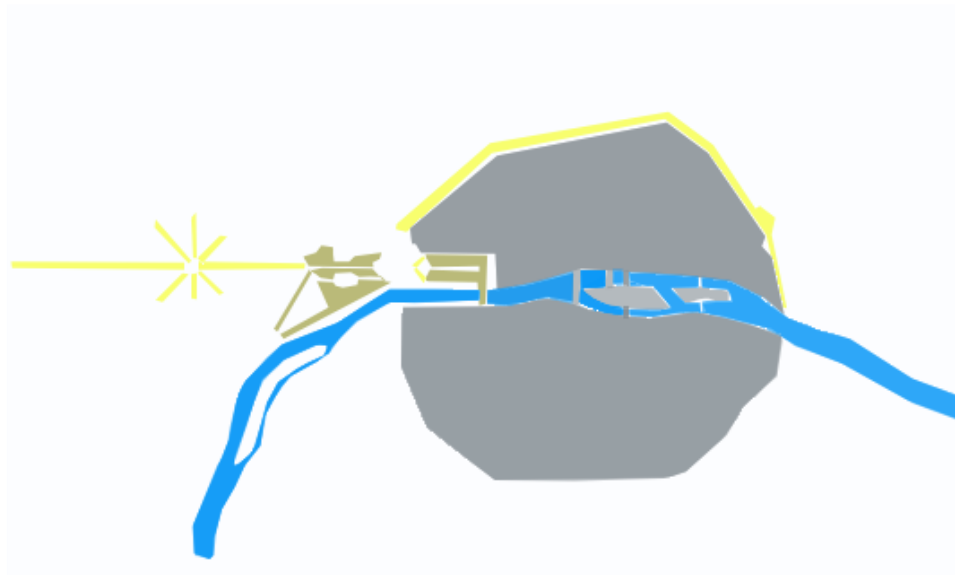


Figure 1-6 – Diagram of the Projected extension of Paris during the 19th cent, Source: (Moholy-Nagy, 1968) redrawn by the author.



Figure 1-7 – Diagram of the Projected extension of Tirana during the early 20th cent, Diagram drawn by the author based on the map of Tirana 1937 (Figure 5-16) - the ottoman city is in grey whereas the proposed cut of a monumental boulevard is in yellow, grid developments in the south below (also the administration of the river bed as a straight line is visible in the proposal

In the case of Berat, this typology can be partially observed in one of the buffer subzones that includes the twentieth-century boulevard and central urban area, representing a post-

war planned urban layer positioned at the edge of the historic fabric (see the planned extension of the centre of Berat in Figure 1-1).

Typology 3 – Vertical Palimpsest

In this type, the buffer zone is understood as a form of vertical stratification associated with an historic core. Within the conceptual framework of the relationship between “old” and “new,” the buffer zone represents the “new” as an upper urban layer that develops above the “old,” rather than expanding horizontally around it. This configuration reflects a condition in which successive historical layers of urban development accumulate vertically, creating a complex spatial relationship between contemporary urban life and underlying archaeological or historic remains. In such cases, while developments in the upper layers may correspond to either Type 1 – *historic accretion* or Type 2 – *planned projection*, the buffer zone assumes a dual role. Based on the specific mode of intervention, on the one hand, it functions as a protective and interpretative layer mediating the relationship between the contemporary city and the underlying heritage remains; on the other hand, it may also pose potential risks to unearthed or partially exposed historic structures due to development pressures and urban use above them.

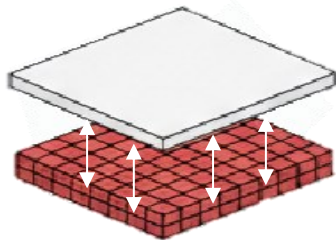


Figure 1-8 – (Left) Type 3 of surroundings Diagram - “Vertical Palimpsest” (Historic core in red, Surroundings/buffer in white), (Right) View of Durrës, Albania where the ancient layering (roman amphitheatre) coexists with the upper byzantine (fortification) and medieval layers (vernacular) and contemporary buildings

In the Albanian context, this typology is particularly evident in the archaeological areas of Durrës, where significant archaeological layers of the ancient city exist beneath the present-day urban structure.

Typology 4 – Landscape as buffer

In this typology, the buffer zone corresponds to the natural landscape within which the historic core has historically developed. Unlike other typologies, here the buffer consists primarily of pre-existing natural or semi-natural terrain that has shaped the form, boundaries, and

development patterns of the historic core over time. The natural landscape thus functions both as a physical context and as a spatial framework that mediates the interaction between the historic core and its surroundings.

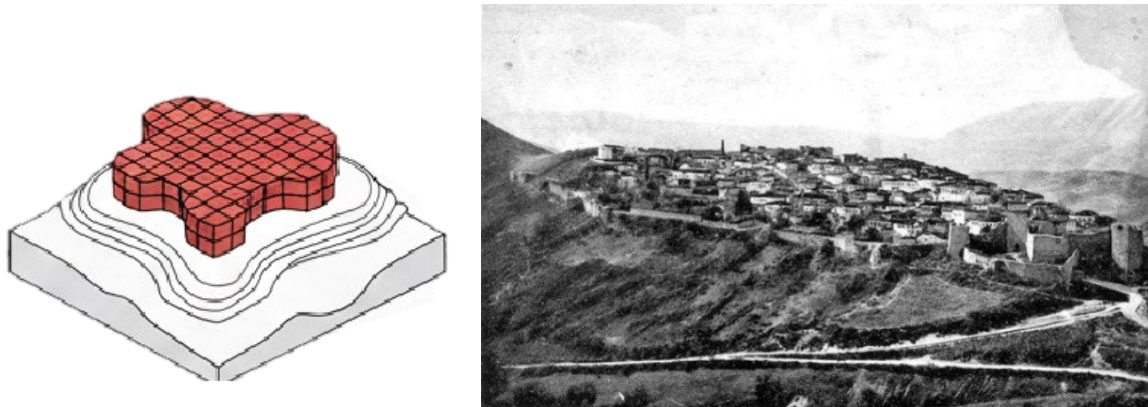


Figure 1-9 – (Left) Type 4 of Surroundings Diagram - Landscape as buffer (Historic core in red, Surroundings/buffer in white), (right) illustration of the castle hill in Berat, the surroundings of the fortified settlement consists in a natural steep slope

In the Albanian context, this type of surroundings is exemplified by the ancient cities of Apollonia, Bylis, and Butrint, (archaeological parks) and partially in several historic urban centres such as Berat, Gjirokastra, Kruja as well as all designated rural settlements where the historic cores are closely integrated with the surrounding natural landscape, which continues to define their spatial and visual relationships.

1.4 Research Objectives

The focus of this research is on the immediate surroundings of historic cities often legally designated as buffer zones and to try to understand them not merely as normative delineations but as zones that engage actively with the historic core.

Since, the first impulse for this study, arose from questioning the criteria that guide interventions within the boundaries of *buffer zones*, it is precisely this intersection between heritage preservation and urban spatial and design logic that motivates this research. The research aims to highlight the importance of cross reference and interdependencies of processes of territorial planning and heritage management. This is considered very important for the purpose of this research due the dual role that the buffer zones have in both protection of the integrity of the historic centre and as a vivid urban area that enables the spatial transition towards the contemporary city. This approach resonates with the work of Kahn (2021), who questions how urban site boundaries engage with the surrounding fabric. Kahn notes that even the smallest urban intervention speaks to a broader project of city-making, and that "defining" applies to both the process and its outcomes. Consequently, the way heritage boundaries are conceived and managed does not merely regulate conservation; it actively informs project design, shapes urban form and public perception.

In fact the research sustains that there is no fundamental difference between the process of protection and that of development. The protection of cultural heritage is a form of development itself, and if this development is permanent and growing in a historic area, it manages to provide resources for many urban functions. This perspective aligns with a growing paradigm shift in the relationship between heritage and planning domains, that calls for the reconciliation of conservation and urban development as mutually reinforcing objectives rather than opposing aims (Pereira Roders, 2019).

1.5 Research Question

The main Research Question is:

How, under which conditions, and to what extent buffer zones function as design or regulatory instrument, **so that they contribute to conservation and to the sustainable development?**

In response to the main research question, the research is composed of three main work packages each led by three sub-questions that focus on the revision, expansion and/or reconceptualization of the concept of buffer zone: *Why did the concept of buffer zones emerge? How do they function in practice? What does their delineation mean for the historic city as an integrated system?*

1.6 Methodology

The research adopts a qualitative method approach that investigates historic and contemporary precedents, to register different conditions and to generate several **indicators** that shall be used to assess to *what extent in practice the surroundings of historic sites or their buffer zones function as design or regulatory instrument.*

The research relies on a historical, theoretical, and critical analysis of historic urban precedents in European context through time. This analysis is considered significant since it reveals interrelations between urban phenomena and preservation approaches in historic cities, during significant paradigmatic shifts in urban theory and transformation approaches in historic cities, even before normative of historic cities and/or buffer zone emerge. My approach is to examine the urban context of the historic sites not just as a whole in space, but as a whole in time. This analysis is expected to provide material for registrations of different conditions in history of relationship between historic urban sites and their surroundings, or a confrontation with different modes of intervention of new constructions within or in the immediate setting of historic urban sites.

While a horizontal axis of historic chronology structures this analysis, a vertical axis registers two tendencies (explained in section 1.1) of either integration or erasure between new

development and historic layers in the city. A key conceptual lens is the analysis through methodological tools of continuities and interruptions, assessing to what extent contemporary interventions respect, reinterpret, or disrupt the urban and architectural whole of historic centres.

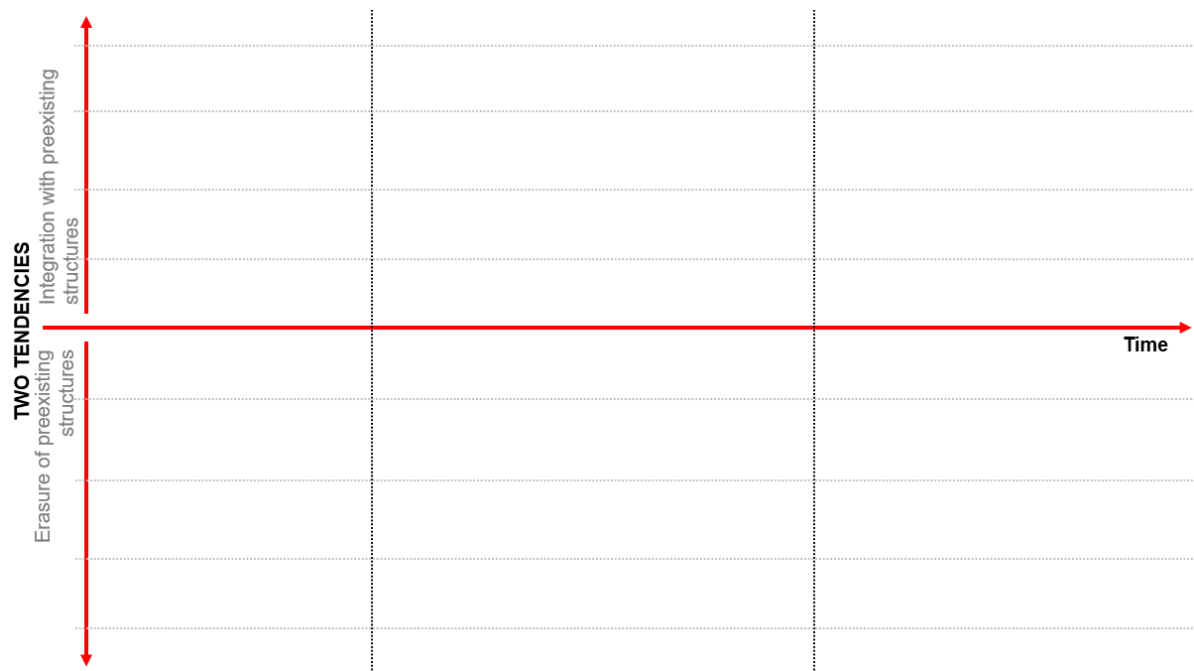


Figure 1-10 - Structure of the historical-theoretical-critical analysis on how, when and why the setting of historic cities became relevant? The horizontal axis marks time since the analysis develops in a historic chronology, The vertical axis registers two tendencies of either integration (+) or erasure (-) based on registered modes of interaction between “new” and “old”

Three historic centres such as Berat WHC, Tirana and Kruja as well as two archaeological sites (Durrës and Finiq) as well as a number of single monuments bearing characteristics of ancient settlements (within the genre of fortifications) have been selected as case studies in Albania. This analysis relies on empirical work done in the framework of this research that evidences integration or erasure tendencies of new developments in the surroundings of historic cities. Investigation undertaken in national case studies has been published either as articles, chapters or conference proceedings during the research period. Indicators at urban and architectural scale are provided also from this analysis.

The issue of scale is at the centre of the methodology of this research. The interdependence and interrelation between urban and architectural scale is investigated in both the historical-theoretical-critical analysis, empirical work and case studies comparative analysis.

An analysis of selected precedents (proposed development projects) in case studies selected in the European context (Rome, Vienna, Graz, London, Paris, Edinburgh, Warsaw, Dubrovnik, and Brugge) aims at investigating contemporary precedents of developments

proposed within buffer zones of WH sites or in the surroundings of historic city layers. Case studies have been selected within the list of World Heritage Sites (with some exceptions) having in common the Cultural criteria for World heritage nomination. They have been selected among heritage sites with a long history of protection in the UNESCO framework or as places that have been in the focus of major urban and architectural transformations in different historic periods and that hold an urban tradition and agreed quality of constructions. They have been selected to represent the four conceptual types of surroundings/buffer zone and to follow four principal criteria:

- a) Similarities in typology of values, including architectural and urban landscape.
- b) All selected case studies demonstrate uninterrupted urban life through main historic periods constituting a variety and richness of overlapping layers of built heritage.
- c) Similarities in challenges in their surroundings or within buffer zones, particularly development pressure, tourism, infrastructure demands, and visual integrity.
- d) Examples of best practices in managing these challenges, including planning regulations, management plans, and urban design strategies.
- e) Evidence of the application of the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach, demonstrating integration between conservation and territorial planning.

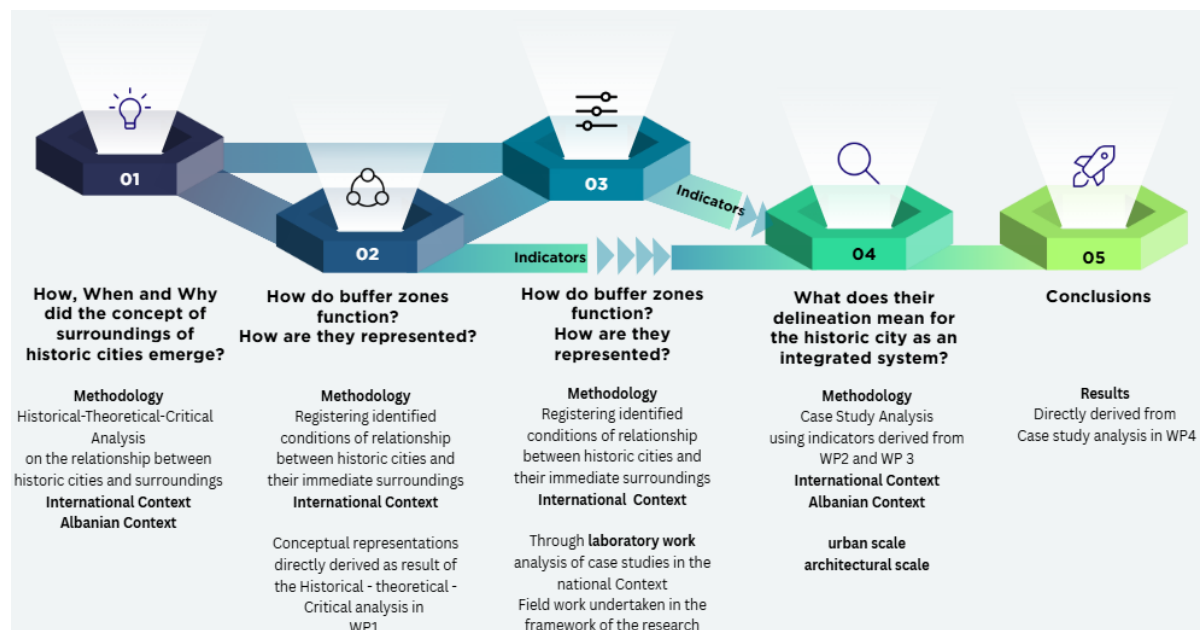


Figure 1-11 - Research Scheme, main work packages, methodology

Modes of interventions in both urban and architectural scale registered as a result of the European level historical-theoretical-critical analysis as well as from the field work analysis at national level shall be used as Indicators to investigate on current approaches of project design in buffer areas (case study analysis). This case study analysis is expected to identify pressing issues and development approaches in the buffer areas or in the context of historic

urban sites.

1.6.1 Structure of the Research

This thesis is composed of 5 chapters as below:

Chapter 1 – Why Buffer Zone? Research context, Objective and Research Question

The chapter provides a background and introduction to the identified need as well as provides answer to the first “Why” question: Why am I studying the Buffer Zone? It further explains the motivation, research question and structure of the thesis.

Chapter 2 – Why, When and How did the Concept(s) of Setting emerge? State of Art

2.1. Conservation and new developments in the historic urban setting: An historic overview in international context

The chapter is responding to the second “Why” question: Why, When and How does concept of setting emerge? It considers the setting / context of historic built areas also before the term “buffer” emerged as a preceding significant process that enabled the shaping of the normative on buffer zones. It shapes the state of art based on a methodology that relies on the historical chronology of the concepts Cultural heritage Monument and Site, Urban Conservation, and Setting / buffer zone.

In the absence of theory or standard practice in the matter, this section deals with investigating: What happens anyway around an historic site over time?

Chapter 3 – Buffer Zone Normative and Function

The chapter builds up from Chapter 2. It deals with the normative concept of buffer zone.

3.1. The concept of Surroundings and Buffer zones normative in the World Heritage Context

This section explores on the buffer zone normative in the World heritage context is analysed as overarching normative at global level.

3.2 The concept of Surroundings and Buffer Zone normative – Overview in Albania

This section explores on the buffer zone normative in the World heritage context is analysed as overarching normative at global level.

3.3 Institutional roles and actors: From Centralized Authority to Fragmentation

The institutional roles and actors in Albania have undergone significant transformation in the 1990s. This section provides an overview of the institutional role as key to understand the functioning of the buffer zone.

3.3. Registration of different conditions and typologies of buffer zones / surroundings of heritage sites in Albania

The chapter presents the concrete work done in the framework of this research that evidences integration or erasure tendencies of new developments in the surroundings of historic cities. The work presented in this chapter is either published in articles or conference proceedings.

Chapter 4 – Modes of Intervention in Buffer Zones – INDICATORS

This chapter provides the result of analysis in both Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. It provides Indicators on Modes of Intervention in buffer zones that informs the analysis of design approaches (case study analysis in Chapter 5)

Chapter 5 - Analysis of design approaches in Buffer Zones

This chapter is conceived as qualitative research based on analysis of selected precedents (design projects) in the buffer zones or in the surroundings of selected heritage sites in Europe. It aims to analyse the potential conflict between development and conservation values from both the Architectural and Urban scale. Analysis in this chapter is undertaken via the indicators provided in Chapter 4.

Chapter 6 – Conclusions

This chapter finalises this work, answering the research question through summarising conclusions. It also points out aspects to be developed in future research work.

Chapter 2

Why, When and How did the Concept(s) of Setting become relevant?

State of Art

This chapter responds to the question (2) Why, When and How does the concept of *setting* become relevant in the architectural and urban discourse related to historic cities? It offers a historical, theoretical and critical analysis that traces the conceptual evolution of the historic city with particular focus to the relationship with its setting. It forms the state-of-art of the research topic. An important outcome of this Chapter are the Design Indicators on Modes of Intervention that shall be used in the evaluation of the design approaches at Chapter 5.

2.1 Conservation and new developments in the historic urban setting: An historic overview in international context

This chapter offers a historical, theoretical and critical analysis that traces the conceptual evolution of the historic city with particular focus to the relationship with its setting. Primarily, it examines the historical and theoretical conditions that first gave rise to the early recognition of historic centres as isolated monuments, to the emergence of the concepts of surroundings, setting, and/or context, and finally to the contemporary formulation of the buffer zone as a normative instrument designed to safeguard the essential relationship between a historic site and its wider urban and territorial context.

Every normative instrument is grounded in a specific historical, empirical and theoretical background. Jacobs (1992) described cities as *"an immense laboratory of trial and error, failure and success, in city building and city design"*, arguing that this laboratory is where planning theories should be tested and learned. Similarly, Le Corbusier argues that human creativity and cultural production move continuously forward rather than backward, and each generation should develop its own ideas and aesthetic expressions by building on past achievements while using the technologies and knowledge of its own time:

"Never has a return to the past been recorded, never has man retraced his own steps.

The masterpieces of the past show us that each generation has had its way of thinking, its conceptions, its aesthetic, which called upon the entire range of the technical resources of its epoch to serve as the springboard for its imagination." (Corbusier, 1973a)

The principal rationale for adopting a historical–theoretical–critical methodology in tracing the development of the concept of “setting”, as a precursor to the normative concept of the buffer zone, is that normative frameworks alone cannot fully explain the intellectual, cultural, and professional debates that shaped them. Regulatory texts codify outcomes; they do not in themselves reveal the theoretical foundations, value systems, and disciplinary transformations that made such codification possible. To illuminate this shift, and to decode the buffer zone concept, the chapter analyses how planners, architects, humanists, and practitioners have historically engaged with the “city through history.” Considering the city in history, it is difficult, and not particularly useful, to draw strict chronological boundaries between its different forms. Cities evolve through complex processes shaped over time by local practices, practical needs, aesthetic preferences, and prevailing cultural or political attitudes. However, to better understand the transformation of cities from one period to the next, this chapter highlights several design and development approaches that emerged

during key moments of transition of each historic period.

Focusing on particularly two tendencies that of “erasure” of the historic city and that of “integration” with the historic city, (see section 1.6 - Methodology), the chapter aims to conclude with a set of indicators (modes of intervention), in both urban scale and architectural scale that are observed in specific moments of transformation of the historic city and its surroundings.

2.1.1 Slow Pre-existences, from Renaissance foundations to the Baroque City

In “*The Matrix of Man*”, Sibyl Moholy-Nagy argues that a city’s personality derives not from material progress alone, but from the unique historical options it has faced, experiences specific to that city. The dynamism of cities that eventually leads to a constant urban change is based on a creative process ignited by the ongoing dialogue and coexistence between past and present. Although old and new built environments coexisted in any time and civilization, Benevolo (1971) and Jokilehto (1986) note that it was during the Renaissance that this duality and contrast became consciously recognized as a cultural issue. Humanists²⁰ were among the first to define a rupture between the grandeur of antiquity and the ruined state of its remains. By distinguishing *historiae antiquae* from *historiae novae*²¹, Petrarch viewed the classical world as a lost ideal rather than a living continuity. Confronted with Rome’s *sacrosancta vetustas*²², he expressed nostalgia in his *deploratio urbis*²³ and condemned the neglect and destruction of its monuments, appealing to prevent such damage. It is due to his insistence that the relics showing the past grandeur of Rome gained a political significance. For the humanists, the ancient monuments provided lessons about history, Latin language and literature, while for the artists and architects, they provided lessons about art, architecture and technology (Jokilehto, 1986). Artists and theorists meticulously measured, documented, and graphically reconstructed original appearances of ancient Roman monuments, turning toward a new intellectual climate that started to develop around the ruins of antiquity. The goal, however, was not to objectively situate ancient architectures in the past, **but rather to integrate them into the present, to interconnect them into the contemporary architectural language.** In fact, ancient vestiges became a

²⁰ Jokilehto (1986) notes that Francesco Petrarch felt a great sorrow in noticing the contrast between the literary memory and artistic remains of the past grandeur of Rome, the state of the fallen walls and the ruined temples and palaces, when visiting Rome in 1337.

²¹ Latin: meaning respectively “ancient history” and “new history” (note of the author)

²² “*Venustas*” is one of the three Vitruvian principles of architecture (“*firmitas*”, “*utilitas*”, “*venustas*”), with “*Sacrosancta*” from latin meaning “sacred/holy”. The whole phrase translates: “Rome's Holy/Sacred Beauty”

²³ “*Deploratio Urbis*” is a Latin phrase that translates to “the lamentation of the city” or “bemoaning the city.”

favourite topic in landscape painting. Even though some remarkable accurate depictions of ancient vestiges were produced by different artists, two examples of which may be seen in Figure 2-1 and Figure 2-2, renaissance artists lacked a true sense of historical distance; they approached the classical past not as a distinct historical era but as a source of universal, timeless norms for building, extracting from it a selective "world of forms" based on stylistic preferences and based on their search for beauty.



Figure 2-1 - View of Old St. Peter's, Rome, in Ruins, Maarten van Heemskerck (1498–1574)²⁴



Figure 2-2 – Colosseum, Hieronymus Cock²⁵

As of particular importance for the purpose of this research are drawings and paintings of great accuracy regarding conditions of monuments in urban context. Giovanni Antonio Dosio is mentioned by Jokilehto (1986) as one of the artists that provided a significant documentation of the condition of monuments remains and their surroundings, serving later as a record of buildings that were later destroyed. (see Figure 2-3). Wittkower (1971) highlights, the views of the 15th and 16th century architects are available in sufficient detail to provide a panorama of their approaches, highlighting their building activity is a direct reflection of their theoretical position. So, by tracing evolution of architectural drawing and building design one could understand the theoretical approach of the architects towards the ancient city vestiges. Going towards the urban scale, early depictions of the city, such as the

²⁴ Source: Krautheimer, R. (1949). Some Drawings of Early Christian Basilicas in Rome: St. Peter's and S. Maria Maggiore. *The Art Bulletin* 31 (3), College Art Association. <https://doi.org/DOI:10.2307/3047240>

²⁵ Cock journeyed to Rome between 1546-8 intending to study antique sculpture but became fascinated with the Palatine monuments. Source: Heuer, C. P. (02.02.2026). Viewing Ruins. *The Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae - digital collection*. <https://speculum.lib.uchicago.edu/itinerary/heuer.html>

reconstruction of ancient Rome in the plan by Étienne Dupérac²⁶ (1574) can be considered instruments that helped to make explicit the relationship between the image of ruins visible in the present and the image historical city to which they once belonged.



Figure 2-3 – Illustrations of Giovanni Antonio Dosio documenting monument vestiges state of conservation as well as documenting monuments surroundings. Source:(Dosio, 1569)

The high level of drawing details suggests a thorough background study on ancient monument vestiges in Rome which Dupérac himself admits in his dedication to Charles IX of France.²⁷ While the viewpoint of the map is elevated to grasp the whole city area and surroundings; the fact that the main monuments are drawn in axonometry to display their grandeur and scale of monumentality, shows the focus given to the singular objects.



²⁶ Étienne Dupérac was a Parisien engraver, working in Rome. His 1574 plan of Rome is both cohesive and an illustration of its major buildings in profile. The plan was originally compiled from a detailed archaeological survey by Pirro Ligorio (c.1510-83), a scholar of the ancient monuments in Rome. Source: RUDERMAN. (1574). *Duperac, Etienne - Urbis Romae Sciographia Ex Antiquis Monumentis Accuratiss Delineata* raremaps.com. <https://raremaps.com/gallery/detail/74291>

²⁷ Source: Jokilehto, J. (1986). *A History of Architectural Conservation* University of York, England]. <https://www.icrom.org/publication/history-architectural-conservation>

files/380/history-architectural-conservation.html, RUDERMAN. (1574). *Duperac, Etienne - Urbis Romae Sciographia Ex Antiquis Monumentis Accuratiss Delineata* raremaps.com. <https://raremaps.com/gallery/detail/74291>

Figure 2-4 - Plan of Rome, first published in 1574 by Étienne Dupérac²⁸. Source: <https://raremaps.com/gallery/detail/74291>

The *Descriptio Urbis Romae*, a depiction of the city of Rome by Leon Battista Alberti (1450) is mentioned by Valenti and Romor (2019) is a very important document in the field of urban survey and drawing. Being among the first known attempts of topographical representation of the city it is a testimony of the configuration of Rome in the middle of the 15th century, as well as one of the first scientific attempts during Renaissance to map Rome, focusing on accuracy rather than subjective illustration. Alberti's map drawing technique was a result of his mathematical interests. He drew the map with polar coordinates referred to a central point, selecting the Capitol Hill as the reference point. (Jokilehto, 1986)

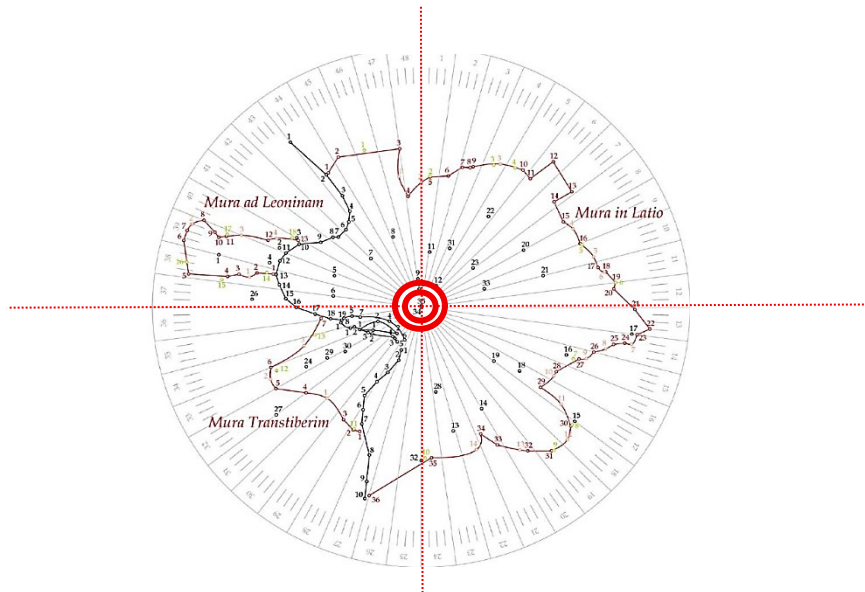


Figure 2-5 - *Descriptio Urbis Romae* by Leon Battista Alberti - Graphic restitution source:(Valenti & Romor, 2019) – the reference point of the map (marked as red dot by the author) is the Capitol Hill

Considering the whole context of knowledge transformation that was happening in Italy in the early 15th century, Choay (2001) notes that it was the awareness of the contrast between a ruined and violated image of a city and a rediscovered dazzling light of its real image in the old texts, that marks the conceptual birth of the historic monument – an embryonic stage that would require three more centuries to acquire its definitive name. Thus, the modern concept of the "monument" develops, as certain prestigious architectural works were mentally isolated from their urban or natural contexts and were increasingly perceived as large-scale sculptures, suitable for relocation or isolation to facilitate aesthetic contemplation. Fragments

²⁸ Étienne Dupérac created also another map which he published in 1577 entitled *Descriptio*, a bird's-eye view of modern (16th-century) Rome.

of works of art began to be collected during early Renaissance, initially for purposes of study and then for prestige. Again, the process of collection is a process of selection and isolation of a selected works of art from the others that are not “worthy of preserving”. First restorations were undertaken as repairing processes for these artworks. Jokilehto (1986) notes that restorations and reform at urban scale was initiated in 1425 by Pope Martin V upon establishment of his court in Rome. He created the office of the *Magistri viarum* to maintain streets, bridges, gates, and walls. These efforts were continued by his successor, Pope Eugenius IV who ordered protection for the Colosseum, while it was Pope Pius II who issued the 1462 bull *Cum almam nostram urbem*, the first specifically aimed at preserving ancient remains. Preservation was justified largely through Christian values, although enforcement was limited. During this period, preservation mainly focused on structures still in use, such as churches, bridges, aqueducts, as well as mausoleum of Hadrian which was used as a residence for the pope. When urban transformations accelerated, the cultural limitations of this Renaissance perspective became evident. Consequently, conflicts between new functions and historic environments were resolved negatively: by imposing specific constraints on selected buildings, while allowing the broader urban and social context to be reshaped by new economic forces. Surrounding environments were generally neglected unless they carried associative historical or symbolic value. While the popes were the ones that exercised their power by signing either orders for protection for selected buildings, and also orders for demolition for others, the real conservative “institution” were often the citizens of Rome or the municipal administration. As Jokilehto (2001) notes, it was the peoples protest that managed to save other monuments at risk from the decision of Sixtus V (1585–90) *to make all ‘filthy’ ruins disappear ‘to the advantage of those that merited being repaired’*. Consequently, although major monuments were restored, they were often cut off from the life of society, preserved mainly through the efforts of specialists concerned with material integrity rather than functional or social continuity. Giovannoni (1995) notes the presence of two tendencies and two confronting approaches which emerges when it comes to renovations proposed in an old centre and when it comes to determining the relationship between the preexisting old environment and the new development. While for one all remnants of the past represent mere “obstacles” except for works of singular importance and highly venerated monuments, for others they are significant and immutable “cornerstones.” A series of scientific²⁹ and philosophical developments³⁰, driven by the continuing quest to

²⁹ Writings of Giordano Bruno on the infinite space, as well as his awareness on the plurality of worlds are linked to his conception on the *movement* and *force* as main elements in the functioning of the universe.

³⁰ Norberg-Schulz mentions Descartes as an exponent of the rational idea that spatial extension is the basic property of all things and that their differences are based on different movements.

understand the world, during the seventeenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries, preceded and guided the gradual transformation of the Renaissance city into the Baroque city (Norberg-Schulz, 1979). While the significance of geometry as a tool for understanding the world had already been acknowledged during the Renaissance (Figure 2-5), in this later period it was reconceptualized. Rather than functioning as a closed and static system, geometry came to be understood as an open and dynamic framework, giving shape to the Baroque phenomenon composed by two seemingly contradictory aspects: systematism and dynamism. The pursue for systematization within the city became firstly evident in Rome, where the urban plan introduced by Pope Sixtus V³¹, marked a “turning point” in the transformation of the city at urban scale. This plan also is example of the approach to erase the preexisting old city except for the selected few parts “worthy” of preserving. One of the intentions of Pope Sixtus V (16th century) in this plan was to demolish the Colosseum to provide space for a straight road which was part of his plan to modernise Rome. For the first time, it was in the Baroque city that the single buildings lose its plastic individuality and becomes part of a superior system, giving a new meaning to the space between the buildings as significant constitutive elements of the urban totality (Figure 2-6).

Moholy-Nagy (1968) introduces the idea that the ordering principle of the growth of the early Baroque city was the establishment of lines of force which defined the tension between various landmarks of the old city. The line of forces and their interrelationship with the old structures create a series of design forces which dominate the architectural work around them. So, in the Baroque city the cohesive element is a line of force rather than a volumetric form. While the plan of Rome of Sixtus V became the prototype of a capital city, which Norberg-Schulz names as the basic unit of Baroque architecture, following this rationale, Giovannoni (1943) identifies a series of practical, structural and technological transformations that played a role in reshaping urban morphology of the cities. Streets were gradually widened to accommodate new modes of mobility, particularly horse-drawn carriages, while the growing presence of grand bourgeois palazzi into the urban fabric, reshaped city silhouettes and streetscapes. At the same time military innovations, especially the use of gunpowder, required the redesign of fortification systems. Together with significant artistic developments of the 17th century, these technological advancements laid the groundwork for Baroque urban and architectural expression. Yet as explained above, technological progress alone does not explain the deeper shift marked by the Baroque, in the conceptual understanding of space. As Moholy-Nagy (1968) notes, **whereas urban**

³¹ The basis of the urban plan designed by Domenico Fontana at the end of the 16th cent., was religious and aimed to manifest the accomplished restoration of the Catholic Church.

space had previously been an attribute of architecture, during the Baroque, this interrelationship was reversed.³²

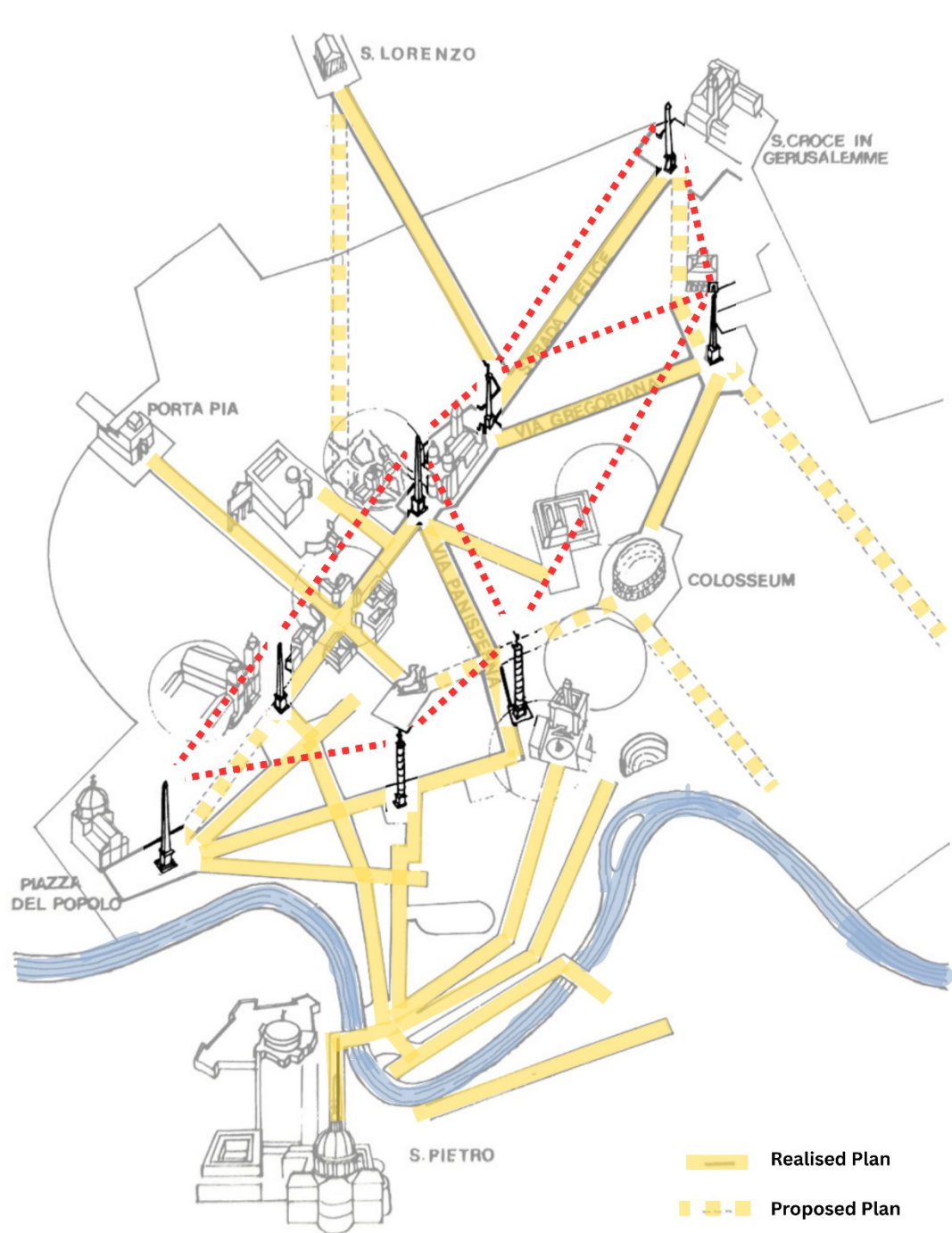


Figure 2-6 Plan of Rome, commissioned by Pope Sixtus V and designed by Domenico Fontana (late 16th Cent). The single buildings are the *foci* departing from which the extension of spaces is designed. Source: reconstruction by Giedion, found Norberg-Schulz (1968), diagram of the routes

³² According to Moholy-Nagy, S. (1968). *Matrix of Man: An Illustrated History of the Urban Environment*. Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers. the Counter Reformation and political absolutism were the historical motivations behind this conceptual change in spatial planning were. So, it was this intangible historic mood, the *Zeitgeist* that shaped a new environment.

The baroque plan organizes extension in relation to foci, which in the case of Rome plan of Sixtus V are the important religious monuments of catholic church. As these foci represent a termination of the horizontal movement they should be marked by a vertical axis. Sixtus V and Domenico Fontana being conscious of this problem used Egyptian obelisks among roman ruins to mark the nodes in their system and the domes of the buildings as terminuses of movement corridors. Although these single buildings had a strong individual plastic value, they were not considered isolated from the whole Norberg-Schulz admits that the Baroque city radiates from or converges from the monumental buildings which represent the basic values of the system.

The planning and adornment of public space was more important than the adornment of the buildings bordering it. Blondel's 18th century plazas cut in the medieval urban tissue of Strasbourg, (Figure 2-7) are examples of the contrast of the significance of the public space versus individual buildings during the Baroque.

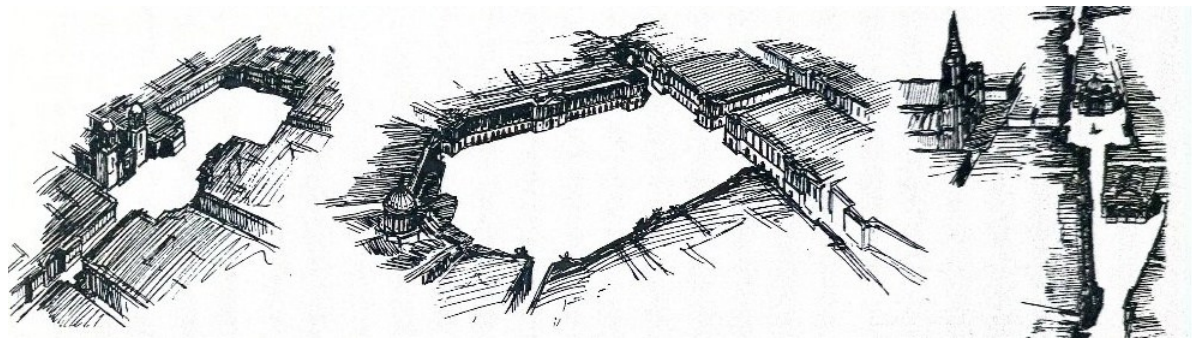


Figure 2-7 – Blondel's plazas introduced in medieval Strasbourg in 1768. The plazas' volumes are sculptured in space, while the buildings' elevations are considered as simple delineation³³

Still, architectural principles based on ideal aesthetic structure and proportions inherited from the Renaissance continued to shape key urban elements. However, at intersections and in piazzas, spatial proportions were now amplified and extended into unprecedented formal configurations. Choay (2001) notes, that Baroque aesthetics cannot be understood when disconnected with contemporary science. Incorporating the knowledge of the time, Baroque urbanism introduced expansive, often linear avenues that integrated with piazzas arranged in rectangular, radial, or radio-centric forms, marking a departure from the more compact and organic structures of earlier periods. (Giovannoni, 1931) observes that the Baroque managed

³³ Source: *ibid.*

to reconcile two seemingly irreconcilable tendencies: **a pursuit of grandeur, novelty, dynamism, with a framework of formal and compositional discipline** (p. 40). This duality is manifested in the juxtaposition of different interpretations of Baroque principles, examples of which can be seen in Bernini's spatial vastness, Pietro da Cortona's inventive scenography, Rome, (see Figure 2-9 and Figure 2-9), and the axial clarity and structural discipline found in the works of Wren (London). The Baroque was not rejected by the following styles neither Rococo or Neoclassicism which contributed to refining and systematizing the baroque strategies. (Choay, 1970) states that its ceremonial form with its monuments its broad avenues lined with uniform buildings remained meaningful until 1830s, deteriorating into formalism only towards the end of the century. Thus, it seems to have provided early conceptual and spatial foundations for the emergence of the modern city in Europe since it continued to be used in the creation, extension and embellishment of cities.

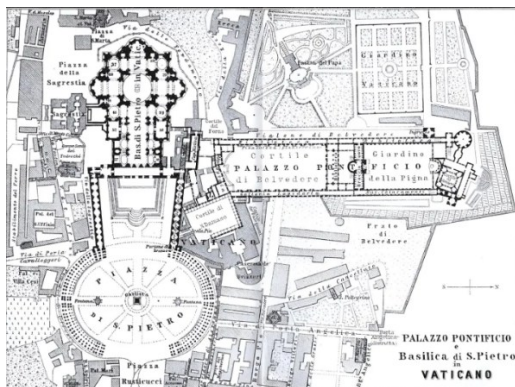


Figure 2-8 View and plan of St. Peters Square, designed by Bernini³⁴

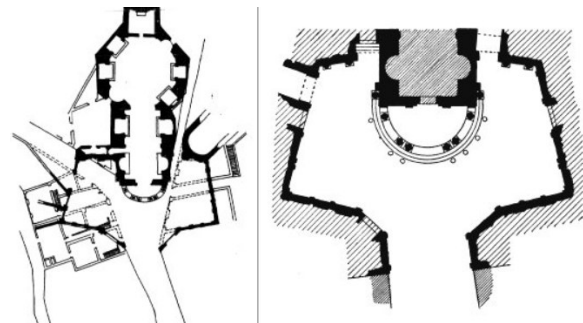


Figure 2-9 (above) Etching by Giuseppe Vasi, 1656-67 -1756 showing the piazza in front of Santa Maria della Pace, Rome. Façade designed by Pietro da Cortona, (below) plan of St. Maria della Pace³⁵

As seen in this chapte, the historic tendency that new monuments were constantly allowed

³⁴ Source: <https://archeyes.com/st-peters-square-by-bernini-baroque-spatial-composition-in-vatican-city/>

³⁵ Source: Krén, E. M., Daniel. (1996). *Web Gallery of Art* https://www.wga.hu/html_m/c/cortona/5/pace4.html

to take the place of the old ones based on the need for innovation and the dialectics of destruction has been present over the centuries. This tendency is described by Choay (2001b) as a broad cultural pattern. In fact, the example of France alone where hundreds of Gothic churches were destroyed in the 17th, 18th cent, is sufficient to describe this attitude towards the pre-existing fabric. One of these cases was the competition for the embellishment of Paris, announced by Louis XV in mid-18th century, that Moholy-Nagy (1968) describes as an attempt to eclipse the star-patterned Versailles of his predecessor Louis XIV promoted as the most famous planning achievement of the 17th and 18th centuries. Pierre Patte proposed the winning plan for Paris introducing nineteen royal plazas, each similar to a cosmos, having a statue of the divine monarch Louis XV at the centre. As seen in Figure 2-11, access routes fan out of the plazas like rays until they abruptly end when meeting an ordinary city street. Patte proposed to let fall all Gothic Constructions, in the name of "embellishment", replacing them by baroque or classical buildings.

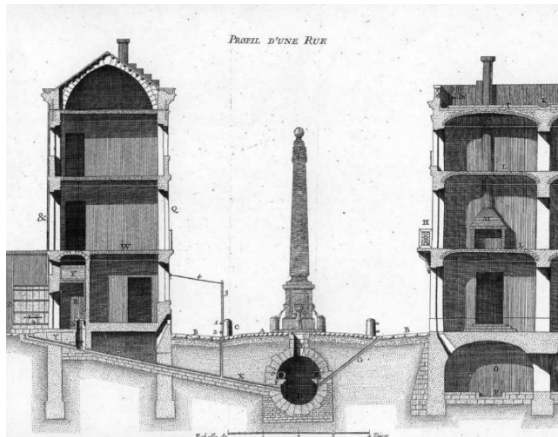


Figure 2-10 Pierre Patte drawing - Proposal for a modern sewer system c. 1769
Engraving
Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris³⁶

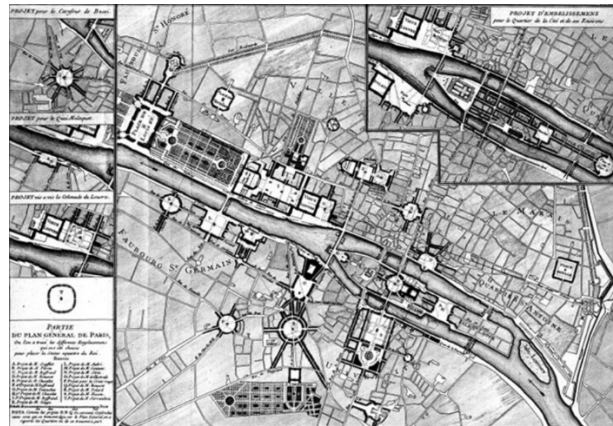


Figure 2-11 Pierre Patte plan of Paris 1769³⁷

Cusack, A. (2008, 01.09.2025). Santa Maria della Pace. <https://www.andrewcusack.com/2008/santa-maria-della-pace/>

³⁶ Pierre Patte, is the first to illustrate a city street with its buildings and sewer system shown in section-a style of rendering. His designs seem to have influenced nineteenth century planners and engineers Krén, E. M., Daniel. (1996). *Web Gallery of Art* https://www.wga.hu/html_m/c/cortona/5/pace4.html

³⁷ Rickert, Y. (2012). Une célébration du roi? Pierre Patte et ses Monuments érigés en France à la gloire de Louis XV [Dossier]. *Les Cahiers des Framespa*. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4000/framespa.1842> , Moholy-Nagy, S. (1968). *Matrix of Man: An Illustrated History of the Urban Environment*. Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers.

It can be concluded that processes of development in the surroundings of the old urban areas in both periods Renaissance and Baroque present both tendencies of integration and erasure of historic areas. Renaissance marks the period of the birth of the early concept of historic monument and many restorations were implemented in this period. Still, due to the fact that monuments are considered as isolated from their surroundings, at architectural scale selected architectural works were mentally isolated from their urban or natural contexts and were increasingly perceived as large-scale sculptures, suitable for relocation or isolation to facilitate aesthetic contemplation. At urban scale only specific elements that were in use such as roads, bridges etc were preserved.

As a result of the selective conservations dedicated only to monumental structures, the effect in the surroundings of these monuments is an empty space with monuments that exist like islands within the territory.

During this period, the “new” is not proposed in the immediate surroundings of the historic city, but rather it is inserted through it and as such the island effect is created.

2.1.2 New / fast beginnings, 19th Century as a Turning Point

The industrial progress that initiated during the late 18th century, as analysed by (Curtis, 1996), was accompanied by a loss of confidence in the Renaissance tradition causing an erosion of the ideal aesthetic structure and favouring more empirical approaches. The historic development of guilds and crafts was disrupted causing a split between hand, mind and eye. This disruption was caused from the establishment of a new economic structure which was not under the patronage the power of religious, state or aristocracy but rather transitioned towards the middle class. The innovations in mobility modes such as railway and steam ships irreversibly changed the old relations and hierarchy in the cities and accelerating the collapse of the vernacular architecture. As scholars have noted, these shifts in approach did not occur in isolation but it came as a general need of an industrializing society. Curtis (1996), observes that the architecture was true to its specific epoch until the 18th century when industrial developments exposed the need to rediscover architecture’s “true path”. In the nineteenth century, buildings which did not resemble those of the past begin to appear, opening the way to modern architecture. According to Floridi (2014) it was the Industrial Revolution that marked the passage from the nominalist world of unique objects to a Platonic world of “types of objects”, concerning perfectly reproducible industrial goods being replaceable and perfectly identical to each other, while Tschumi (1996) notes that space has rarely been discussed by architects before the beginning of the 20th century. Choay (1970) identifies two distinct yet interconnected dimensions of the radical transformations brought about by the Industrial Revolution. On one end she puts the new agglomerations on a gridiron plan in

USA and on the other the drastic changes in the spatial organization of European ancient towns that display revolutionary changes in the mentality of the city dweller and the initiative of the planners. It was this supposed chaos and eclecticism seen in various 19th century revivals of historic forms, that proceeded the Modern Architecture.

Mid. 19th century theorists such as Viollet le Duc and Gottfried Semper discussed the possibility of a genuine modern style of which they had little conception of its form. Semper who is famous for his long-term view on the history of forms, criticized the dominant architectural discourse of his time, especially the ahistorical classicism and the formal imitation of past styles promoted by academic institutions such as the École des Beaux-Arts. He focused on how basic types of the past might be interpreted in fresh ways in the present. Caniggia (2001) explains that according to Semperian criticism, the built environment is seen as the product of three interacting elements: *topos* (referring to the site / context), *typos* (refers to the fundamental type) and *tekton* (related to construction, structure, and craftsmanship).



Figure 2-12 Partial View of the Commissioners Plan for Manhattan 1807³⁸

³⁸ Source: Library of Congress Geography and Map Division Washington, D.C. 20540-4650 USA dcu, Digital Id: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3804n.ct000812>



Figure 2-13 Haussmann Plan for Paris, roadways built between 1852 and 1914



Figure 2-14 Haussmann Plan for Paris, buildings built between 1852 and 1914³⁹

It is worth mentioning Viollet-Le-Duc, architect but also an important theorist of this time who, shared a similar aim for finding a 19th cent. genuine style but followed a different approach compared to other theorists. Being very aware on new materials such as metal and glass, he formulated a model of architectural history that connects fair expression of the construction and materials. As mentioned by Bandarin and Oers (2012) and Curtis (1996) he provided inspiration to several masters of the Modern Movement through his writings characterised by rationalism. Le Duc represents the French approach towards heritage which seems to directly clash with the English romantic approach represented by Ruskin. He considered restoration of a building as the reconstitution of a 'complete' and 'ideal' state of the monument, one that perhaps never existed. This same methodology of stylistic reconstruction was applied to both individual monuments like Notre-Dame in Paris as well as to entire urban ensembles, as exemplified by his work on the reconstruction of the city of Carcassonne. For this reason, he was called by Bandarin and Oers (2012) as a militant interventionist, nevertheless, Viollet-Le-Duc was among the ones who valued the past. His perspective was forward thinking and was demonstrated in his *Entretiens sur l'architecture* (1863–1872), considered a seminal text that captures how the architectural and urban role evolved in response to the profound social and technological shifts of the 19th century. It is impressive to what extent his work paved the way for a modern understanding of architectural and urban heritage, an approach that was followed by architects of the time such as Schinkel (Altes Museum in Berlin) or Henry Labrouste (St. Genevieve Library in Paris) and would later be further developed by Austrian architect Camillo Sitte.

³⁹ Jallon, B. N., Umberto; Bouttée, Franck (Eds.). (2017). *Paris Haussmann: A Model's Relevance*. Park Books.

In the nineteenth century, the city still exhibited the characteristic spatial fabric it had acquired gradually over the previous two centuries. Choay (1970) thinks the urban complex may have been a semiotic system whose elements were related within a kind of code practised by inhabitant and planner alike, until the industrial revolution. Urban plans were directly responding to the aims of the power such as clergy, feuds or merchant guilds.

However, this period marked a turning point of unprecedented and accelerated transformation, as urbanization emerged as a mass phenomenon.

Large populations moved into both existing urban centres and newly formed cities, many of which had previously been small towns or rural villages. As Giovannoni (1931) noted, the nineteenth century may be considered “the century of great cities, where industrial life developed, and also the century of the sciences, among which hygiene emerges as a key theme in urban and territorial organization” (p. 62). Historic urban quarters, aside from a few exceptional cases, underwent significant degradation and it was not valued since it was seen as Bandarin and Oers (2012) and Hall (2014) state “a place of physical and moral decay”. Their inherited proportions and typological coherence were lost, as these areas became increasingly overcrowded, unsanitary, and deprived of basic infrastructure. The absence of urban services and public regulation contributed to the worsening of living conditions. Simultaneously, both public and private capital became powerful and dynamic agents in urban development. Speculative practices, particularly those involving standardized models such as the “house type,” came to dominate architectural and volumetric decisions, privileging economic profit over spatial quality and public health. Choay (1970) notes that the dweller was unable to assimilate this urban revolution in terms of any previous process in which one urban order was blotted by the other.

Curtis (1996), p.23 highlights the moral and political criticism towards monstrous conditions of living as important factor influencing the architecture in addition to the disruption of the status quo as above mentioned. Among the few alarmed with the situation of unplanned growth and unprecedented social and health problems, emerging needs for new modes of transportation experienced in traditional cities, were humanists, architects and urbanists. Also as Curtis (1996) notes, the essay written by Nietzsche in 1873 on the use and abuse of history had particular influence on the emergence of discourses on topics of “renewal” since it called Europe to leave behind its historic tradition and to extract its inner potential. In fact Choay (1970) calls 19th century the century of criticism and she states that **there is a definite correlation between the impoverishment of the urban system itself and the appearance of theoretical treatises preceding and justifying various practical proposals.**

In response to these needs, two schools of thought existed as identified by Benevolo (1977)

and Bandarin (2024).

The first school of thought were the Utopians whose proposed solutions were utopian ideas of starting from scratch. Choay 1996 calls this school of thought with the term urbanism describing it as a process that radically contested the analysis of the hidden order of the existing city and ultimately led to the a-priori construction of a different and new one. The 19th century utopian thoughts on city planning, are also grouped by (Curtis, 1996) in two main streams,

1. the first one stemming and influenced from the Enlightenment principles and as stated by Choay (1970), the first to emerge. It is commonly named as “the Socialists” by Curtis (1996), or “progressists”. Figures such as Fourier, Owen and Henry Saint Simon were looking forward towards a new social order. Among these, the Phalanstère of Fourier⁴⁰ (see Figure 2-15) and the New Lanark of Robert Owen⁴¹ were utopian proposals to a new life, inspiring important social reforms. On the other hand, they were also responses to the crisis. Air, light and greenery became symbols of progress.

Even if they represented a key contribution to the definition of modern urban planning principles, they resulted in isolated realizations and did not manage to be integrated with the traditional historic city.



Figure 2-15 View of a Phalanstère common space and leisure activities⁴²

⁴⁰ François Marie Charles Fourier (1772–1837), a French philosopher, developed The Phalanstère as a theory of universal harmony. It was utopian community building hosting around 2,000 people, dedicated to agricultural production. cited in Bandarin & Van Oers (2012)

⁴¹ Robert Owen (1771–1858) a social reformer and one of the founders of socialism and the cooperative movement. His reform proposals were implemented in the cotton mill factory of New Lanark, which he partly owned. This experiment became a model for the improvement of the social conditions of the working classes. – cited in ibid.

⁴² Source: <https://topalovic.arch.ethz.ch/Courses/Student-Projects/FS23-Phalanstere-The-Legacy-Of-Charles-Fourier-From-The-Palais-Societaire-To-Todays-Cooperatives> (accessed december 2023)

2. The second group being “mid.19th century moralists” or the conservative” or “nostalgic culturalists” (Choay, 1970), who is called by later scholars a “romantic approach of restoration” such as Ruskin, Morris and Pugin stating that mechanization causes degradation in all aspects of life and protesting against the fragmentation while longing for the compactness of the medieval society.

Taking shape after the progressist model, this second group did not emerge from a revolutionary vision but rather from criticism of an existing urban situation. They struggled to preserve the pre-industrial city and, as Bandarin and Oers (2012) state, they saw the preservation of monuments as an important pillar of social and cultural development. Choay (1970) stresses that underline is a form of nostalgia which had awakened gradually with the development of historic studies at the end of 18th century and the application of historical perspective to the study of art and culture.⁴³ Romantic aesthetics linked organic and mechanical to beauty and ugliness respectively. Writings of John Ruskin and William Morris were particularly influential in Great Britain due to what Choay calls the presence of a great force of tradition and due to the fact, that being a pioneer in industrialism it was where the bitter effects of industrialism were felt the most. For both Ruskin and Morris, recovery of the architecture of the past was a way of recovering the spiritual values on which past communities rested. It is interesting how for the moralists the structure offered by the gothic was considered to be the most rational and the most uplifting spiritually.⁴⁴

Even if the Gothic was considered as an example of a rational architecture in France, as noted in the writings of Victor Hugo or in the architectural analysis of Viollet le Duc, it was not projected in the future in the same way as in English thought. While Hugo writes that *“architecture is dead, killed by the printing and that the great edifice of humanity shall not be rebuilt, it shall be printed”*⁴⁵, Le Duc analyses the system of Gothic architecture only to hold it up to modern technicians as an example of rational structure.

In a similar way, the Austrian architect and urbanist Camillo Sitte, contemporary of Morris, as

⁴³ Choay (1970) notes the influence of Hegelian thought on highlighting the formative role of the ancient Greek city in embodying a perfect cultural whole. She also lists other historians of 19th century such as Michelet, Burckhardt and Fustel de Coulanges who compared the disunity of the preindustrial city with the tightly knit cultural communities of the Middle ages, Renaissance and ancient Rome. These concepts were precised by Max Weber (1921), as the dichotomy *Gemeinschaft – Gesellschaft* (community – society).

⁴⁴Pugin (1836) *Contrasts*, cited in Curtis (1996). Also in Choay (1970) it is stated that Ruskin was inspired by Pugin, instigator of the Gothic revival and who aimed to recapture the overall process of an organic society through architectural activity.

⁴⁵ Cited in Choay, F. (1969). *The modern city: Planning in the 19th century*. In *Planning and Cities*. George Brazillier Inc. “Interestingly and ironically, today we print buildings” (Source:..Pantelis G. 2026)

noted by Collins and Crasemann Collins (1965), tried to reach back to anything of beauty that existed before the urban explosion that marked his own day. He tried to extract universal principles out of the array of concrete examples that old cities present. Supporter of the culturalist model, according to Choay (1970) he was the one to make the transition from pre-urbanism to urbanism. Analysing classical, medieval and baroque spatial organization, Sitte could find the same fundamentals which are inherent in the connection of their elements. For Sitte space is continuous and buildings have meaning only insofar as they are related to each other. He quotes “the modern disease of isolated construction is to be condemned, and monuments are actually to be built into the urban fabric: on ancient European plazas” which modern planning can conceive only in term of voids.⁴⁶ The limitation of Sitte’s approach was the exclusive significance given to aesthetic dimension which made it mono-semantic, scarcely considering their meaning or intended use. It also ignored the complexity of the modern city seeking application only in the neighbourhood scale. This actually explains why it was used mainly in plans for suburban areas or for city extension. The most important achievements based of planning by Sitte, as the Collinses (1965) note, are by Karl Henrici who planned the extension of Dessau (1890) and Munich (1893), by Theodor Fischer, the Chief Town Planner in Munich from 1893 on. Fischer was also a bridge between Sitte and progressist modern architects such as Gropius and Bruno Taut who were among his students.

The second school of thought comprised what Bandarin and Van Oers (2014) refer to as the “urban engineers.” These were technical experts who approached urban problems on a case-by-case basis, prioritizing pragmatic and legislative solutions to issues related to hygiene, housing, and social well-being. Unlike those driven by aesthetic or historical concerns, this group sought to address the pressing public health crises of the time by advocating for large-scale demolitions within historic urban fabrics to make way for modern infrastructure, improved sanitation, and open public spaces. The impact of these interventions was profound and long-lasting, shaping urban planning practices for over a century and, in many instances, continuing to influence contemporary urban policies. Similar processes took place in Florence, where the demolition of the old Piazza del Mercato Vecchio in 1865, replaced by the present-day Piazza della Repubblica, resulted in the erasure of medieval quarters and the old ghetto. The most emblematic case of this approach even though it did not directly aim at improvement of local situations but as Choay (1970) states lied in a dual concept of circulation and respiratory system, is Baron Haussmann’s extensive plan of transformation for Paris (1853–1870), which reorganized the medieval city into a more hygienic, efficient,

⁴⁶ Cited in *ibid.* p.104

and aesthetically unified metropolis. Choay (1970) names the Haussmann approach as Regularization that is a form of critical planning whose explicit purpose is to regularize a disordered city and disentangle it from its dross, the sediment of past and present failures. Paris became an example of similar type of regularizations throughout Europe such as overall transformations in Berlin, Cologne (Henard) and Barcelona (Cerdà) as well as fragmentary efforts of regularization of certain squares in Antwerp, Brussels or Dresden, unsystematic opening of main arteries like those in the Viviani plan for Rome namely the two axes Corso Vittorio Emanuele and Via Nazionale. In London similar efforts were the work of official organizations such as the Office of Woods and Forests, the Metropolitan Board of Works, and the London County Council in Trafalgar square, New Oxford Street etc.

As Pinon, 2002 cited in Bandarin & Van Oers 2014, states its aim was to redesign the entire city due to new demands of modern life (such as traffic), to develop new residential and commercial spaces for the high-income and middle-income classes, and to facilitate tighter military control of the city after the 1848 uprising. Rome is another example of historic capital cities when the model set by Haussmann was applied since after it became the capital of Italy in 1870, it was the subject of a similar plan.

Vienna originally a Roman, concentric cathedral town, surrounded by a fortification ring, did not follow the example of other capitals that sprawled beyond their fortification walls in endless ribbon development. Moholy-Nagy (1968) notices that when the fortification walls were dismantled in the nineteenth century, Vienna ordered its new growth concentrically in clearly defined sub cities, linking the commercial core with a beautiful surrounding landscape.

Abercrombie considering⁴⁷ that the main characteristics of Vienna's plan are due to abandoned fortifications, indicates the advantage that Vienna had over Paris, not having the need to demolish homes during a period of housing shortage. The demolished medieval bastions of Vienna provided sufficient space for the Ringstrasse, a circular, tree-lined boulevard flanked by public buildings and manicured parks.

⁴⁷ Cited in Winkler, T. (2021). Vienna's Ringstrasse: a spatial manifestation of sociopolitical values. *Journal of Planning History*, 20(3), 269-286.

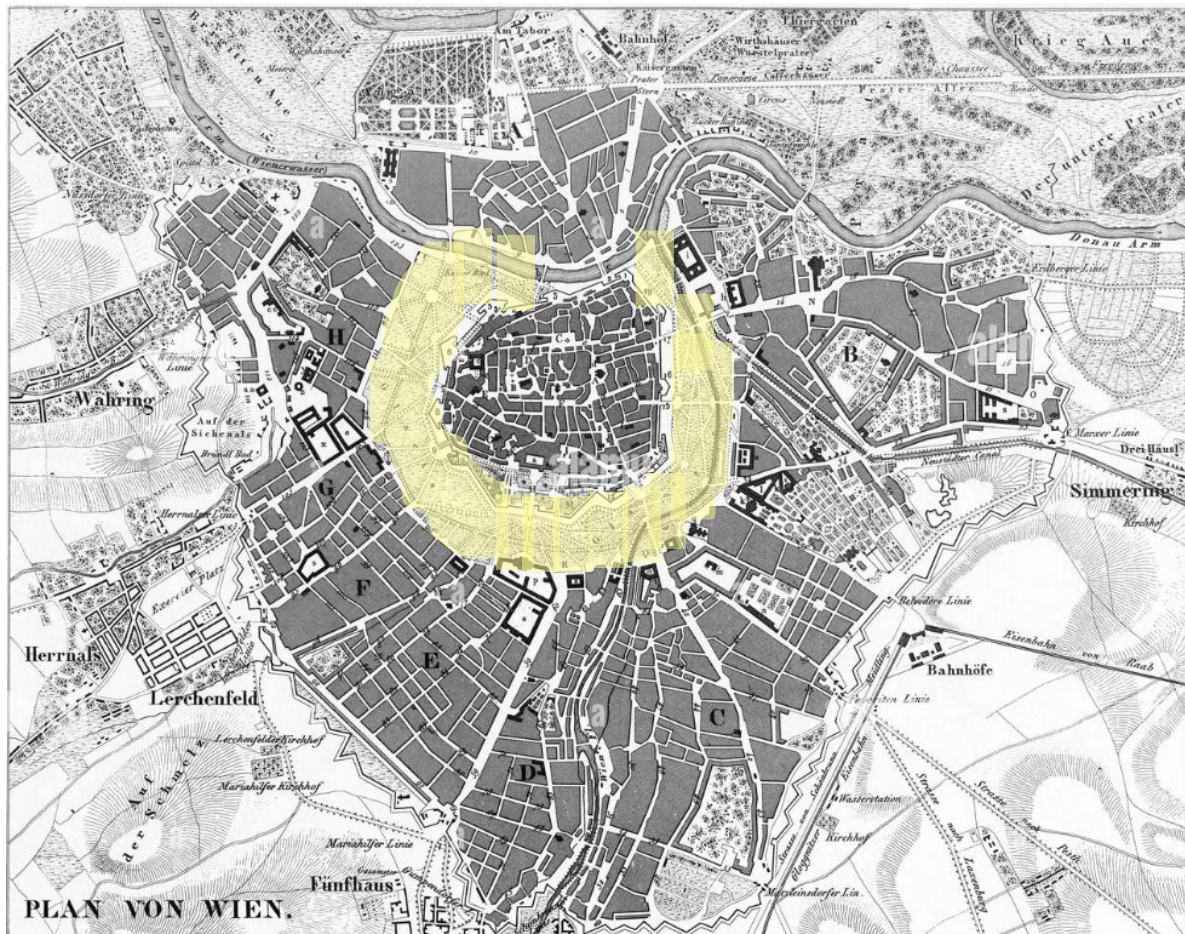


Figure 2-16 Plan of Vienna after the demolishing of the fortification bastions (1860). The landscape belt left around the old core (highlighted in yellow) and the created suburbs (C-H) are visible in the photo.⁴⁸

The model of urban sanitization initiated in 19th-century Europe was subsequently adopted widely, particularly in Italy, and in many respects remains influential to this day. These strategies were by no means confined in time and space only for 19th and to Western Europe. Urban renewal projects such as post WWII Communist urban policies in Albania that echoed the sanitization logic of *risanamento*,⁴⁹ particularly acted through the demolition of old bazaars in cities such as Tirana and Berat etc, which were deemed unsanitary and incompatible with the new ideological order.

Scholars like Sitte and Buls during this time were amongst the ones outcrying from the developments in urban planning and raising the questions on aesthetics of cities. Each not influenced by the other it is a confirmation of the fact that in the late 19th century these matters

⁴⁸ Reference from Moholy-Nagy, S. (1968). *Matrix of Man: An Illustrated History of the Urban Environment*. Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers. who also noted that it was the creation of the sub cities (suburbs) that actually prevented for at least a century the destruction of the beautiful rural landscape

⁴⁹ Italian for Sanitization

were “in the air”⁵⁰ However even though the aesthetic principles raised by these scholars, recalling on the peculiar charm of old cities, had an undeniable impact on the field and professional debate on city planning, as Bandarin and Van Oers (2014) argue, it was this technical-rationalist approach that laid the real foundations of modern urban planning.

Choay (1970) calls the planning process of 19th century as **critical planning** and states that it took three forms namely: **regularization (Haussmann) preurbanism (utopias) and urbanism**. The creation, extension or organization of cities along three pre-industrial patterns being:

- (1) the baroque or neoclassical ceremonial forms (Berlin, Vienna, Cologne, Cracow),
- (2) The essentially British residential scheme,
- (3) the Colonial checkerboard scheme (Savannah is an example of this),

During the 19th century the historic city was **not recognized as a heritage system but**, as Bandarin (2019) and Choay (2007) state, **as an object**.

Only individual monuments that symbolized glorious tradition of cities such as fortifications, religious, statutory etc. mattered. The concept of ‘heritage’ emerged alongside the rise of modern nation-states and their need to define distinct traditions and identities. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the effort to construct national identities often turned historic monuments into symbols for celebrating national epics and shaping collective traditions (Hobsbawm, 1983). This is also related to the creation (foundation) of modern nations (national states), accompanying the emergence and rise of capitalism and the two industrial revolutions. The national states had to acquire a new distinctive identity and architecture, and urban planning was very instrumental for it.

In fact, Choay declares that **the 19th century was the first to be concerned with conservation of the past as a whole**. France was at the forefront, with the creation of the *Commission des Monuments Historiques* in 1837 and detailed monument inventories compiled by Prosper Mérimée⁵¹ in the mid-1800s. In Great Britain, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, founded by William Morris in 1877, shows how heritage and monuments were becoming increasingly important in modern European society, supported

⁵⁰ Sitte's statement, cited in Collins, G. G., & Crasemann Collins, C. (1965). *Camillo Sitte and the birth of modern city planning*. Phaidon Press.

⁵¹ Prosper Victor Considérant (1808–1893), a French philosopher and a follower of the ideas of Fourier. During a period of exile, he created a Phalanstère in Texas, which was an unsuccessful experiment. Cited in Bandarin, F., & Van Oers, R. (2012). *The Historic Urban Landscape Managing heritage in an urban century*. Wiley Blackwell.

by leading thinkers of the time, including Victor Hugo.⁵²

As stated by Bandarin and Oers (2012), it was in the aftermath of the French Revolution in 19th century, that the initial sparkle for the idea the institutionalization of heritage and urban conservation emerged, together with a new socio-economic order in Europe. The recognition of the value of the historic monument, as shown by Françoise Choay (1992) became the key for a modern understanding of heritage.⁵³ Also, the disciplines of archaeology and history initiated specifically in this historic context. This development was both a societal response to the emerging concept of heritage and the result of an intense intellectual engagement that laid the groundwork for modern conservation practices. The contrasting visions of figures like Ruskin and Viollet-Le-Duc, one advocating for the preservation of historic authenticity and the other for stylistic restoration, reflect the broader tensions between romanticism and rationalism, between memory and progress, that have shaped conservation theory ever since. Despite their opposing methods, both approaches contributed to the establishment of heritage as a shared cultural value, transcending national boundaries. Their legacy helped shape a foundational understanding of urban and architectural conservation that continues to influence contemporary debates, revealing how deeply modern ideas of heritage are rooted in the intellectual and cultural upheavals of the nineteenth century.

The concept of **the historic city as a heritage category** in the modern sense only emerged toward the end of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. The conservation of historic cities became a focus for planners and architects, initially in Europe and subsequently in other parts of the world only during the second half of the twentieth century (Choay, 2001b).

The first alerts to the public opinion towards the threat of interventions to alter the structure of ancient cities came from Ruskin in 1860s, time when the Grand Travaux were starting in Paris. This position is rooted in the value and the role that Ruskin assigned to domestic architecture which he regarded as constitutive of the urban fabric. However, this is also related to the creation (foundation) of modern nations (national states), accompanying the emergence and rise of capitalism and the two industrial revolutions. The national states had to acquire a new distinctive identity and architecture together with urban planning was very instrumental for it he did not manage to formulate his view explicitly since he paralleled the

⁵² Victor Hugo (1802–1885), was a leading and influential advocate of monuments' preservation. In the 1831, in the Preface of his work, *Notre-Dame de Paris*, he writes: '... en attendant les monuments nouveaux, conservons les monuments anciens. Inspirons, s'il est possible, à la nation l'amour de l'architecture nationale.'. Two years later he published his *Lettre sur le vandalisme en France*. Cited in *ibid*.

⁵³ Cited in *ibid*.

historic city to an historic monument in larger scale which makes him concerned more with architecture than the city. In his desire to live the historic city in the present, Ruskin, in Choay's view, imprisons it in the past. The process that he fails to consider is the alternative of the historical city the one that is tied to historicity's process of becoming.

Outside of the specific realm of urban planning, Sitte's theories also apply to the conservation of the old cities. Thanks to Sitte and his contemporary Burgomaster Charles Buls who was responsible for the restoration of the Grand Place in Brussels, a new objective was formulated: *the preservation of an urban ensemble and its fabric* Choay (1970).

19th century was distinguished by a complex interrogation of the values and practices associated with the historic monument, the lucidity of this questioning, emanating principally from Italy and Austria has rarely been equalled since. In fact, Riegl (1903) reacted against the radical disassociation between knowledge value and art value. Merimee and Viollet le Duc shared the same concerns on the coming hegemony of the reason and tried to highlight the importance of conserving the monumental heritage. Le Duc in fact tried to find a new art of building called forth by a weakening of the artistic will and the architectural sensibility. In fact the antagonism between the spheres of reason and of art remains at the heart of Western philosophical debate.

In summary, the 19th century can be named as a turning point. Development approaches during the 19th century this period are explained with what Choay (1970) calls: regularization (Haussmann) preurbanism (utopias) and urbanism. Two objectives were given exclusive priority: traffic and hygiene.

Due to the fact that the Historic city is acknowledged as a heritage category only at the end of the 19th century, the tendencies of erasure are more evident and undertaken in a larger scale than the tendencies of integration. While the tendencies of erasure involved the urban scale, the tendencies of integration are mainly linked with the aesthetic and visual aspects of the city (eg. Camillo Sitte) and are influential in an urban design scale (urban units) and in architectural scale.

While the historic city experienced development, it is also true that the first-time urban space was conceived as a value. The urban project is based in the idea of the city as organism.

1. The city was conceived as an object
2. An analytical method of classification and system was used where visual factors were important. The concept of function evolved by biology based on systems created by planners who applied to the city biological images such as nucleus, circulation and cell.

2.1.3 The historic city during the Modern Movement

The Modern Movement redirected urban planners' focus away from the late-nineteenth and early 20th century' ideals of harmonious development, toward a vision centered on functional urban growth. During this period, movements like the *Arts and Crafts* in Britain and America, the German *Deutscher Werkbund*, and Vienna's *Wiener Werkstätte* were reshaping architecture and urban design, creating a new visual language to meet the demands of an emerging industrial society (Giedion, 2009; Pevsner, 2005).

At the same time, other innovative proposals emerged trying to address the challenges of the modern industrial city, sometimes as urban utopias, such as Tony Garnier's *Cité Industrielle* (Garnier, 1917). Many leading architects of the Modern Movement, including Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe, were either directly involved in or inspired by these ideas. Following the post-war avant-garde schools like the *Bauhaus* in Germany and *Vkhoutemas* in the Soviet Union, as well as movements such as *De Stijl* in the Netherlands, in 1923 Le Corbusier redefined the principles of architecture and urban planning with the publication of his *Vers une Architecture*, urging architects not to remain attached to models and styles of the past, which were detached from the needs and realities of the present.⁵⁴ He is known also for stigmatizing Sitte as an apologist "for the donkey's way and a *"passe au petit pied"*".⁵⁵ Together with Giedion in the name of the doctrine promulgated by CIAM they depicted Sitte as the incarnation of the most retrograde attachment to the past, the sworn enemy of modern urbanism.

The notion of Modernism is based in the fracture with the past and in the eclipse of history. The concept of death of traditional art and history in the view of Tafuri (1970) is seen to be embraced firstly from the avant-gardes and afterwards from the main figures of Modernism. The decision of Gropius not to include history classes in Bauhaus belongs to this wide movement whose historical and conceptual roots are linked with the Hegelian thought (1817-1826) as well as part of the empirical alliance with the technological universe typical of the great European atelier of constructivism. The doctrine of the Modern Movement, shaped during the 1920s and 1930s through the work of CIAM⁵⁶, marked a sharp break from the

⁵⁴ Le Corbusier (1977) cited by Curtis, W. (1996). *Modern Architecture since 1900*. Phaidon Press Limited. .

⁵⁵ Cited in Choay, F. (1969). The modern city: Planning in the 19th century. In *Planning and Cities*. George Brazillier Inc.

⁵⁶ *The Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne or International Congress of Modern Architecture (CIAM), active from 1928 to 1959, was an organization that brought together leading European architects to advance the principles of the Modern Movement across architecture, urbanism, landscape, and industrial design. Established in June 1928 at the Château de La Sarraz in Switzerland by 28 architects led by Le Corbusier, Hélène de Mandrot, and Sigfried Giedion, CIAM functioned as a major and influential twentieth-century platform advocating architecture as a discipline fundamentally linked to social reform and modern urban life.*

approaches to the historic city advocated by leading thinkers of the previous generation as mentioned by Mumford (2002). CIAM owed its worldwide publicity to the personal writings of Le Corbusier⁵⁷. It promoted replacing the traditional city with a new modern urban order built around high-density public housing, innovative residential typologies, and extensive transportation infrastructure. As Choay (2007) notes, the artistic and architectural avant-gardes of the twentieth century went so far as to actively oppose the preservation of ancient monuments. Le Corbusier's *Ville Voisin* (1925), for example, proposed demolishing much of old Paris, preserving only a handful of monuments. After the Second World War, this Modernist manifesto became an official doctrine, inspiring destructive urban renewals well into the 1960s and beyond.

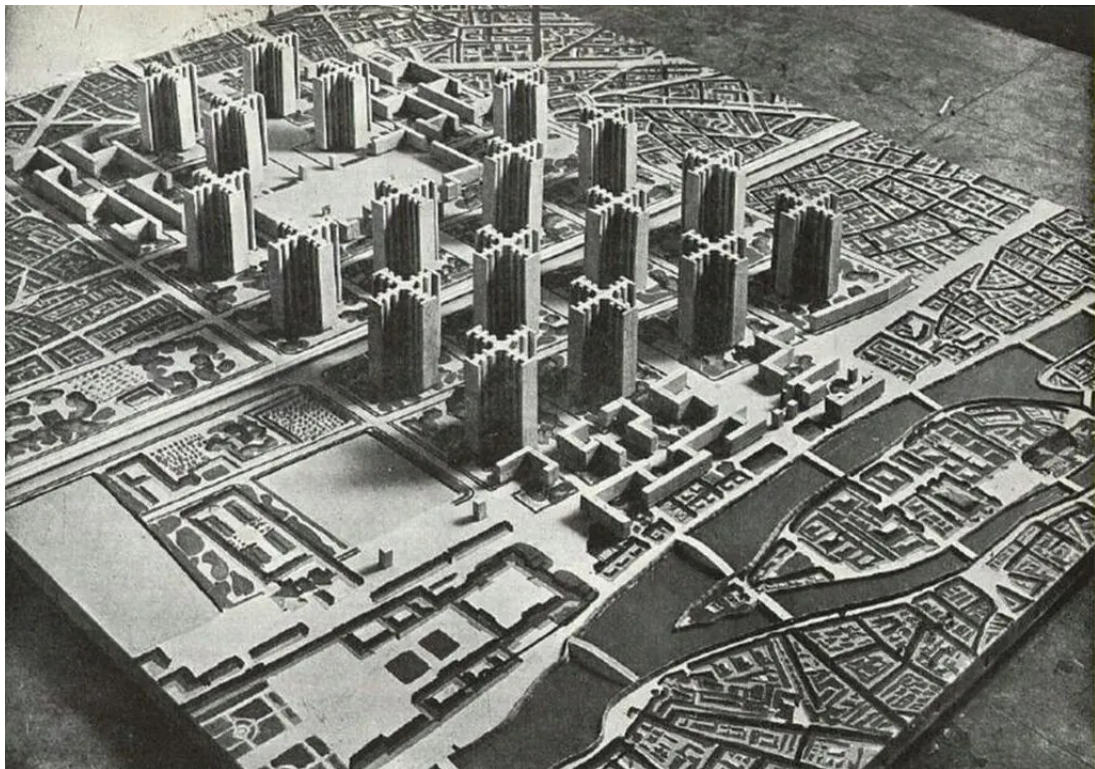


Figure 2-17 Le Corbusier's Ville Voisin (1925)

Parallel to these developments, an international group of architects, archaeologists, and conservators, including figures such as Gustavo Giovannoni and Belgian architect Victor Horta, contributed to the 1931 Athens Conference⁵⁸, the culmination of more than a century

⁵⁷ The CIAM Charter of Athens, 1933: Outcome of a similar effort. (1963). *Ekistics*, 16(95), 263-267. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43622757>

⁵⁸ Gustavo Giovannoni and Victor Horta (among other architects and restorers) participated in the Athens Charter of 1931 (the First International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic

of debate over the conservation of ancient monuments and sites.

The International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments as a result of which the Athens Charter in Conservation was produced is often seen as the starting point of modern conservation and the foundation of an international (though still largely European) heritage movement. It paved the way for later Charters, the establishment of international conservation organizations, and ultimately conventions such as the 1972 World Heritage Convention. The 1931 Athens Conference was the first occasion on which different national conservation approaches and legislative systems could be compared, fostering cross-disciplinary exchange. While still rooted in an 'aesthetic' European view of heritage, it opened new directions by emphasizing public education and the use of scientific methods in conservation. Crucially, it also introduced the idea of urban heritage, promoted the integration of historic fabric into urban planning, supported maintaining traditional uses, and stressed the importance of protecting the setting of monuments, especially when new construction was proposed.

"The Conference recommends that, in the construction of buildings, the character and external aspect of the cities in which they are to be erected should be respected, especially in the neighbourhood of ancient monuments, where the surroundings should be given special consideration. Even certain groupings and certain particularly picturesque perspective treatment should be preserved."
(Congress of Athens, 1931)

Although its recommendations were recognized by the League of Nations in 1932, the significance of the Athens Conference became fully evident only after the Second World War, with the adoption of the 1964 Venice Charter and the subsequent rise of an international conservation movement under UNESCO (Bandarin & Oers, 2012). Modern architecture is solicited by the economic, social and psychological transformations brought to light during the 19th – 20th cent. scientific revolution. However it becomes a movement, a specific line of thought and action in the aftermath of WWI, when as stated by Benevolo et al. (1977) the architecture itself presents the character of a scientific research. The initial phase of this research, which proceeds from the particular to the general, and which, in several major European countries, was experienced during a short time frame (from 1924 to 1933), typically does not extend beyond the neighbourhood scale. This can be seen in the progression of topics addressed at the first four CIAMs: in 1928 at Chateau La Sarraz, where the first CIAM was held, the general principles were discussed; in 1929 in Frankfurt, the focus was on

Monuments). He was a key figure at this congress, representing Italy and helping to draft the final charter, which focused on the conservation and restoration of ancient monuments

housing; and in 1930 in Brussels, the neighbourhood was the central theme. Connection of the housing estates with their urban context came at attention and as Gold (1998) notes, at this point Le Corbusier and others succeeded in persuading CIAM to broaden its discussions towards a “functional city”.

The study of the city, which became the subject of the 4th CIAM in 1933⁵⁹, had on a predominantly theoretical character and was later formulated into a series of general propositions, which were published by Le Corbusier in 1943 under the title *La Carta di Atene* (The Athens Charter). As Choay (2001b) notes, the international conference leading to the Athens Charter was an exclusively European affair.⁶⁰ Figure 2-18



Figure 2-18 Views from CIAM 1 Declaration of La Sarraz, 1928, (left) and from CIAM 4, 1933 (The Charter of Athens)⁶¹ right,

Thirty-three cities⁶² were examined during the 4th CIAM Congress to enable the working groups to identify and understand the challenges they faced in relation to a shared phenomenon: the disorder produced by mechanization and the absence of any deliberate attempt at adaptation. To address these issues effectively, it was essential to acquire comprehensive knowledge of these cities, to understand their nature and their structural composition (Corbusier & Eardley, 1973). Gold (1998) notes that studies prepared for CIAM

⁵⁹ During CIAM IV, 33 urban analysis of the following cities were presented and discussed: Dessau, Frankfurt, Cologne and Berlin; Oslo; Stockholm; Prague; Budapest and Zagreb; Dalat (French Indo-China); Bandoeng (Java); Athens; Brussels and Charleroi; Paris; London; Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and The Hague; Littoria, Como, Rome, Genoa and Verona; Warsaw; Madrid and Barcelona; Zurich and Geneva; Los Angeles, Baltimore and Detroit. Source: Gold, J. R. (1998). Creating the Charter of Athens: CIAM and the functional city, 1933-43. *Town Planning Review*, 69(3), 225.

⁶⁰ The second held in Venice in 1964 saw the entry of three non european countries: Tunisia, Mexico and Peru. 15 years later 24 countries represented 5 continents had signed the WH Convention.

⁶¹ Source: <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/history-the-arts/history/heritage/ciam-congres-internationaux-darchitecture-moderne>, Source: <https://ciam.ir/en/> (accessed decemer 2024)

⁶² Benevolo, L., Giura Longo, T., & Melograni, C. (1977). *La progettazione della città moderna*. Laterza. , Gold, J. R. (1998). Creating the Charter of Athens: CIAM and the functional city, 1933-43. *Town Planning Review*, 69(3), 225. , ibid.

IV were deemed excellent enough by the organisation's Secretary-General Sigfried Giedion to "*lay down the principles of contemporary city planning in the Athens charter*". Actually the Athens Charter was not an immediate product of CIAM IV, it took 10 years to complete due to inability of the members of CIAM IV to agree on a set of closing resolutions, delegating the task to a small group of senior members. According to Benevolo (1971), the industrial revolution and the Modernism came as an attempt to solve the problems of the expanding city. The famous idea that the scope of modern architecture would extend from design of a spoon to the design of the city was exposed during the modern movement. The introduction of town planning to the curriculum of the Bauhaus as noted by Gold (1998) is a clear example of this new awareness that architect work extends in various scales.

Despite the iconoclastic reputation of modernism, there was a section on conservation of historic buildings that was added at the insistence of the Italian group. It was argued, for example, that buildings were worth conserving if they truly represented the past, if they did not constitute a health hazard and if they neither stood in the way of developing the transport system nor affected the organic growth of the city. Koolhaas (2004) states that far from being the enemy of modernity, preservation is actually one of its primary inventions, emerging specifically to address the modern challenge of "what to keep" during periods of rapid change. Architecture was influenced only from the disruption of the status quo, but mostly from the moral and political critiques towards the non-human social conditions evidenced in highly dense urban sites following the industrial revolution (Curtis, 1996, p.36). Choay argues that although the Industrial Revolution marked an irreversible rupture in human history, it also **universalized the concept of the historical monument**, accelerating protective legislation, expanding its geographic reach, and helping establish restoration as an institutionalized discipline closely tied to advances in art history; for this reason, she characterizes the period from the early nineteenth century to the adoption of the Venice Charter in 1964 as the "period of consecration" of the historic monument. Building on this broader redefinition of heritage, Frampton (1995), draws from German and French artistic criticism from the eighteenth century onward and proposes that the future evolution of architecture should arise from the continuity of tectonic traditions. His analysis shifts the focus from stylistic imitation toward technique, the art of making, highlighting how contemporary architects engage these traditions, while effectively reducing *topos* to geomorphology and *typos* to a limited set of patterns consolidated during the Modern Movement.



Figure 2-19 - View from the works of the II International Congress of Restoration, Photo taken by S. Carillo, Source: (Pane, 1964)

Early chronicles of Modernity were clearly committed to the idea of a unified spirit besides the parallel developments such as Art Deco, National Romanticism and the continuation of the classical Beaux-Arts. However, these early chronicles had several differences in establishing a starting point for Modernism. Nicholas Pevsner while exploring the social moral basis of architecture declares as starting point the 1860 Art and Crafts movement of William Morris, while according to Giedion, the 19th century as a split period and the technological developments as sparkles for the starting of Modernism. Hitchcock, on the other side, being preoccupied with the visual features of architecture refers to the 1932 international style exhibition curated by Philip Johnson as an important starting point (Curtis, 1996).

This period also marked the emergence of modern conservation thinking, shaped in large part by the influential work of the Viennese art historian Alois Riegl. His ideas, which defined the role of heritage in modern society, continue to underpin contemporary conservation theory. In his seminal text *The Modern Cult of Monuments (Der moderne Denkmalkultus, 1903)*, Riegl distinguished between two major categories of heritage value. The first category, which he termed 'memory values', relates to the significance attributed to the antiquity of heritage. This 'value of antiquity,' Riegl argued, does not require specialized knowledge;

rather, it is readily understood and appreciated by the broader public. The second category concerns the '*contemporary values*', or the '*use value*' of monuments, qualities that set them apart from archaeological remains and ruins. Riegl further divided these into 'art value,' referring to the artistic qualities of a monument that remain perceptible today, and 'newness value', which is tied to the sense of an untouched or pristine appearance that enhances a monument's appeal to the public. These distinctions, as noted by Bandarin and Oers (2012) remain foundational to modern heritage discourse.

In summary, during the Modernist period, after the acknowledgement of the historic city as a heritage category, two separate threads of disciplinary interest in the historic city seem to evolve. One, is the thread followed by the discipline of conservation and the other thread which is very active in this period is the thread followed by the discipline of architecture. The historic city is the heritage category where the two threads meet and confront with each other. While again both tendencies of integration and erasure exist again the modes of intervention in the historic city are strongly connected with the infrastructural and technological requirements and are proposed in both urban scale and architectural scale. The Modernist period is specific in the relation between the "old" and the "new" since it is the only period where the roles are reversed. Focus is given to the "New" and the "Old" is conceived as a background (buffer) of the "new". The thread of the Conservation discipline during this period is moving forward towards building up the normative. The tendencies of integration during this period are more influential in the architectural scale.

2.1.4 Between the World Wars

Giovannoni was among the theorists that during the period between the two World Wars discussed on the issue of relationships between new buildings and existing historic contexts.

Giovannoni (2025) notes the disproportionate expansion of the old city, caused by addition of new districts. Holding the role of the central nucleus of the modern city, the historic core suffered from converging traffic within it and experienced transformation into a business district and luxury housing. Value of land and buildings enormously raised due to this centripetal development calling for further vertical additions on the old buildings and causing increased density. Similarly, Lazzari (1942) defined the *setting of a monument* as its "*vital space*": consisting in an ensemble of architectural elements, composing the spatial context conceived and intended by the artist around its work. These elements may be insignificant from a historical-artistic standpoint; however, they often serve to isolate the figurative space of the work of art from the artistically unqualified, natural space that surrounds it. While highlighting that visual perspective was the typical criterion to define the monuments

surrounding space, Lazzari noted that it had an important limitation from the methodological and theoretical point of view, due to its being imprecise. A monument could demand a greater or shorter viewing distance for a conventional optical framing of the building.

Lazzari noted two cases, the first one being, when such space is understood as an integral component of the artwork, preservation must entail the complete conservation of its volumes and surfaces, apart from necessary interior rehabilitation. In the second, detailed historical study provides the basis for determining the scale and configuration of neutral or protective zones.

Giovannoni (1943) called on establishing a series of theoretical schemes for the modern cities. He does not agree with the proposal of series standardised buildings in city scale by Le Corbusier as a substitute of the individual character of historic centres even calling cities like *ville radieuse* proposed by Le Corbusier(1967) as *“grotesque concepts which are not feasible neither economically nor constructively”*.⁶³

According to Choay (2001a) he represents the historical figure of the ancient city, granting to the ancient urban ensembles both a use value and a museal value by integrating them into a general conception of territorial planning and development. Giovannoni considered “urban heritage” not as a distinct discipline but as a constituent part of the original doctrine of urbanism.

Bandarin and Oers (2012), p.2 state that *“...the Modern Movement of the 1920s and 1930s imposed a ‘fracture’ within a disciplinary context of management of urban space that was previously largely inspired by unitary approaches linked with historical typological research... Modernism rejected the attempts to ensure continuity in urban development. The historic city was not considered part of modernity, nor a component to integrate; it was simply and abstractly ‘erased’ from the urban planning scene. »*

Modern architects such as Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier, or Hannes Meyer were interested in vernacular forms, so in many regards the fascination with Mediterranean hill towns and mobility was not new. Indeed, the fascination with architectural vernaculars was distinctly modern. According to Tafuri (1970) p. 70, despite their significant differences, both Le Corbusier and Frank Lloyd Wright regarded the incorporation of historic centers into modern cities as a danger to contemporary urban life. Tafuri cites Le Corbusier's *Urbanisme* (1925), where he expresses the desire to see historical areas, such as Place de la Concorde, emptied and preserved as peaceful monuments, stating: *“the historical past is respected, even more is saved... It is true that things die one day... the past is not a threat to life anymore,*

⁶³ Giovannoni, G. (1931). *Vecchie città ed Edilizia nuova*. Tipografia Sociale Torinese.

it has found its proper place" (p. 275). Similarly, Frank Lloyd Wright, in *"An Organic Architecture"* (1939, p. 124), described historic parts of London as *"great museum pieces"* and envisioned replacing degraded urban areas with parks and green spaces. Both architects perceived the urban fabric as a single structure, independent of its historical layers. Consequently, when Italian architectural culture in the 1950s moved to protect historic centers, it did not follow the modernist tradition rooted in the CIAM IV-Athens Charter but instead turned back to the ideas of Gustavo Giovannoni⁶⁴.

Tafuri (1970, p. 84) acknowledges Benevolo's contribution to conservation theories for historic urban settlements but points out a critical weakness: the exclusion of the architectural dimension postpones the problem to solutions that cannot be automatically derived from urban structure alone. Tafuri stresses that this reflects a broader flaw in Italian culture, a tendency toward dilettantism and fragmented approaches to urban issues. As Le Corbusier's had anticipated, historic cities were increasingly treated as objects to be saved. However, while Brandi's division between historic cities and new architecture was coherent, since it rejected modernism outright, modern architects were less consistent. In practice, they accepted what they theoretically opposed. For Tafuri, the renunciation of the project to reconfigure the historic city was ultimately a refusal to understand it critically. Conservation, he writes, was reduced to a problem of urban scenography, superimposed on a functional restructuring, arbitrary both in its premises and objectives, and lacking a coherent historical understanding. Italian architecture's supposed historicism, he argues, was only superficial, a hesitant and fearful attempt to break from tradition.

Samonà's 1959 book *"Urbanistica e l'avvenire della città storica"* marks a shift. Instead of seeing historic cities as arenas for speculative construction, Samonà offered a structural reading, understanding urban form as a dynamic organization shaped by tensions between permanence of structures and morphological transformations. Unlike more fleeting studies, such as Lynch's work which enjoyed and still enjoys popular success, Samonà's book opened serious new ground for analysis. Saverio Muratori's school, Tafuri notes, deserves credit for grounding its research in detailed readings of urban form. However, he criticizes its methodology for being ahistorical, often distorting both analysis and case selection. Samonà argued that safeguarding historic cities requires integrating old fabrics into the evolving urban life, and where that process doesn't occur naturally, it must be encouraged. Modern architecture, rather than avoiding historic areas, should intervene carefully to reveal the deeper meanings of historical fabrics and renew them. This would inevitably involve a certain violence, but it could also generate a living dialogue between the permanence of the past

and the energy of the present. A vivid example of this idea is the Samonà brothers' project for the new Parliamentary Offices: the ancient urban texture is preserved as a backdrop behind delicate steel structures, with an expressive play of forms suggesting the influence of Paul Klee.

Similarly, Le Corbusier's project for the Venice hospital establishes a dialogue between the old city and the new structure, treating Venice's organic historicity as a framework to be respected but also reinterpreted. In doing so, he shows how historical dialogue and the redefinition of meanings are inseparable. When Rossi (1982) compares the city to a great architectural artifact and seeks to recover the symbolic meanings of urban places, he resists dissolving architecture into its context. Tafuri (1970) sees this focus on symbolic and historical significance as both the most promising and the most ambiguous part of Rossi's work. (see Figure 2-20)

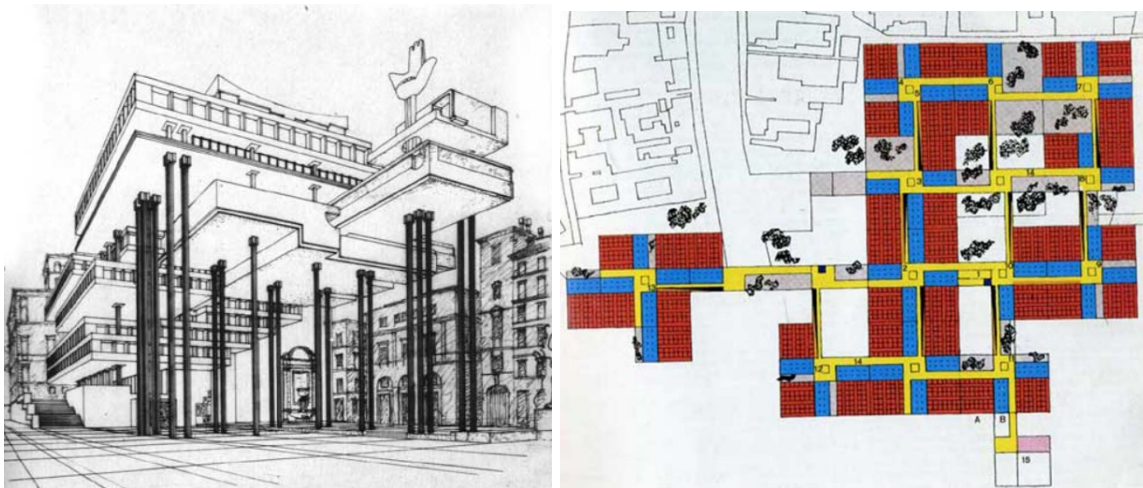


Figure 2-20 (left) – Giuseppe Samonà New Parliament Offices, 1967 – (Right) Unbuilt Venice Hospital project, Le Corbusier 1963-64

As Choay (2001b) notes, by the end of the WWII the number of inventoried assets has multiplied tenfold but their nature has scarcely changed⁶⁵. Since that time all forms of the art of building - public and private, sumptuous and utilitarian - have been added to the list, under new denominations: *minor architecture* - *vernacular* (without architects) originating in England to distinguish buildings of regional character and the *industrial architecture* also first

⁶⁵ Monuments were designated based on primarily age value and were based mainly in evaluations coming from history and archaeological field. Until the 1960s the chronological frame in which historic monuments were inscribed was, as today, virtually boundless as its starting point, where it converged with that of archaeological research. Source Choay, F. (2001b). *The invention of the historic monument*. Cambridge University Press.

recognized by the English.

In summary, during this period the discourse on relationships between new buildings and existing historic contexts was active (led by Giovannoni). The historic city was conceived as an object to be saved. Tendencies of integration focused more in the urban scale.

2.1.5 1940-1970s

The first years after WWII, it's when Le Corbusier elaborates *l'Unité d'habitation* theoretically at first and then practically. It was a result of the research on relationships between residence and services by finding the right scale that enable association of residence and services based on certain qualitative modalities. All proposals for the integration of housing and services, from Le Corbusier's *Unité d'Habitation* (1947–1952) to the experimental housing schemes of Bakema and Van den Broek (1950s-1960s) in the Netherlands, largely remained at the level of theoretical hypotheses and were only partially realized as isolated prototypes⁶⁶. Yet it is precisely these avant-garde proposals that sharpened the discourse on the structural and institutional barriers that precede the design phase (Benevolo et al, 1977; Mumford, 2000; Frampton, 1992,).

Nevertheless, Choay (2001b) notes some developments in the awareness towards modern architecture as a heritage field. In France a commission recently charged with defining the "heritage of the 20th cent" sought to elaborate a set of criteria and a typology that would leave no historically significant witness unprotected. The architects themselves are equally concerned with the official classification of their works. During his lifetime Le Corbusier had begun to gain protection for his built works - Villa Savoye has given rise to a series of restoration works more expensive than those of many medieval buildings.

The projects of transformation of central zones in great preexisting cities were logically more related with the specific characteristics of the urban tissue where they were to be integrated. Benevolo et al (1977) find of particular interest some projects studied for London namely: Holford for Picadilly, the project of London Conty Council for the area of Barbican⁶⁷ and the project dealing with a vast area at east of Regent Street explained in the Buchanan report.

Among the architects, planners, and social thinkers of his time, Gustavo Giovannoni was perhaps the one who most clearly understood the role of the historic city in modern society.

⁶⁶ *L'unité d'habitation* a Marseille was supposed to be the first unit of a big urban system comprising 16 vertical Unités and a certain number of row houses (as explained in *Oeuvre complete* cited in Benevolo et al, 1977 p.101),

⁶⁷ Cfr "Architektur Wettbewerbe n.43, cited in Benevolo et al, 1977 p.118

As noted by Zucconi (2014)⁶⁸, Giovannoni not only articulated this vision but also defined the practical tools of urban conservation. His contributions were so foundational that scholars like Choay (2007) and Bandarin and Oers (2012) credit him with shaping the technical approach that continues to guide urban conservation today.

He was also the first to use the term “urban heritage”. Giovannoni’s ideas emerged from the same modern urban needs that had informed thinkers like Camillo Sitte. The historic city was widely seen as inadequate for an age of machines, mass communication, territorial planning, and rapid expansion. Yet what distinguished Giovannoni was the remarkable modernity of his approach: he brought together Ruskin’s romantic, memorial view and Sitte’s rational, form-based perspective into a single, coherent vision capable of addressing a broad spectrum of societal needs. This position stood in stark contrast to Modernist theories, epitomized by Le Corbusier’s Plan Voisin, which proposed erasing the historic city entirely in favor of a new functionalist grid.

Giovannoni’s influence extended beyond theory. As an active practitioner, he developed a full methodology for managing and conserving historic cities, an approach that remains central to the discipline. He emphasized integrated planning as the key tool for guiding the functions of the historic city, connecting it to modern infrastructure, and maintaining its social fabric. One of his most important principles was the need to preserve not only individual monuments but also their surrounding built environments, the urban fabric that embodies historical layering. This position stood firmly against the “dismemberment” of buildings, a practice still common in many places. For Giovannoni, historic urban areas required conservation strategies similar to those used for monuments: reintegration of missing parts where appropriate, and careful de-densification (*diradamento*) to restore functionality without compromising historic form.

He firmly rejected the idea of freezing historic centres into museum-like districts, a practice then widespread in Italy and elsewhere, which cut them off from contemporary life and reduced them to tourist enclaves. Because of the breadth and coherence of his approach, Giovannoni is widely regarded as a precursor to the conservation policies that gained international traction in the second half of the twentieth century, often influenced directly or indirectly by his work. Bandarin and Oers (2012), p. 22 note that “*the Modern Movement’s radical rejection of the historic city prevented its leading architects from appreciating the value of urban layering. Rooted in its ideological foundations, Modernism was unable to engage meaningfully with the parallel debates on heritage conservation and urban form that*

⁶⁸ Cited in Bandarin, F., & Oers, R. v. (2012). *The historic urban landscape: managing heritage in an urban century*. Wiley Blackwell.

were unfolding at the same time.”

On the same line of thought Benevolo (1977) considers that the only way to address the challenges faced within the historic centres and in their surroundings, is through a well-designed regulatory plan, supported by ongoing policies that not only manage the situation but also foster a gradual change in societal attitudes. Given the current state of transition, where old cultural principles have lost their influence and new ones are not yet established, it is crucial to impose strict and detailed protections on historic neighbourhoods. Flexible or generic regulations would be ineffective because there is no shared cultural understanding to support them. Although, in theory, rigid rules are not ideal, at this moment greater strictness is necessary, until respect for historic environments becomes a natural part of social behaviour. At the same time, architectural culture must move beyond polemics and engage in an objective study of our relationship with the past. The theoretical debate against academic tradition is over; now we must critically reassess the historical foundations of modern architecture and recognize our complex position. Architecture, like language, must create a world of forms that expresses society's life, and for a language to remain vital, it must maintain a living connection with history. Today, however, continuity with the past is more difficult than ever: we can no longer adopt tradition as a stable model, nor rely on academic conventions. The rupture with pre-19th-century architectural tradition is definitive; we are no longer inside that tradition but irreversibly outside of it.

In summary, despite all the developments of thought in the conception of the When the ICOMOS Congress drafted the International Charter on the conservation and restoration of Monuments and Sites in 1964, Choay (2001a) noted that, the theoretical and practical framework in which the historic monument was inscribed remained that constructed by the 19th century. According to Giovannoni⁶⁹ a historic city is itself a monument, but at the same time a living fabric: such is the double postulate that permits a synthesis of the museal figures of urban conservation upon which Giovannoni founds a doctrine of conservation and restoration of urban heritage. It can be summarized in three guiding principles.

1. Historic urban fragments should be integrated into a territorial urban plan.
2. The concept of monument should be related to the built context in which it is found. The very nature of the city and of traditional urban units is their relationship with the “setting” and its wide context.
3. Finally, once these two conditions have been fulfilled the ancient urban ensembles call for preservation and restoration procedures similar to those that Boito defined for

⁶⁹ As cited by Choay (2001)

monuments. Transposed to the dimensions of the urban fragment or nucleus their essential objectives are to respect its scale and morphology and to preserve the original relationships that linked built parcels and circulation paths.

2.1.6 Post-Modernism

Considering that “the history of architectural theory in the postwar period has been impacted by the coming and going of a series of theoretical frameworks”, Fischer (2020) sees the evolution of architectural theory “as a game of chess, where every actor is keen on launching a move that will be acknowledged as significant, responding to the existing field and anticipating future positions”.

In recent international literature addressing the history of twentieth-century architectural theory, the shift from the modern to the contemporary is agreed to have started in 1954, while the 1968 is often seen as a decisive moment, giving rise to a “new” architectural theory. As noted by Norberg-Schulz (1980), dissatisfaction with Modernism in the post-war decades, encouraged architects and planners to rethink their analytical tools, drawing on fields such as geography and psychology. This shift opened the way for new perspectives in urban conservation, particularly those that used human perception as a basis for interpreting and designing space. Although these explorations primarily targeted design practice, they also offered fresh insights into how people experience historic urban environments. Even though the good intentions of modern architects were generally accepted, as Rowe (1994), wrote in his book *“The Architecture of Good Intentions”*, a growing critique was faced by modern architecture. Constant reactions against the conventional pedagogy in architecture and urban planning were presented by researchers like Rossi (1982) in *“Architecture of the city”*, (Venturi, 1977) in *“Complexity and contradiction”*, and Jacobs (1992) in *“The death and life of great American cities”* among others. They advocated the idea that city planners should represent the interests of the local urbanites, *‘just like a lawyer would support the concerns of a client’* (Jencks, 2011). Otero-Pailos (2010) argues that postmodernism in architecture, as both a stylistic and intellectual movement, germinated in the postwar period, took root in the 1970s and flourished in the 1980s. He also argues that the radical break from modernist ideology started to happen when in the early 1960s a young postwar generation of architects sought to re-ground the future of modern architecture in the premodern past. In academic research terms, the direction changed from the abstract ideas of space and form towards new notions of history and theory, changing how architects learned and understood the relationship of modern architecture to its history.

Within this context, two figures proved especially influential in urban planning: Gordon Cullen in Great Britain and Kevin Lynch in the United States. Cullen (2012) argued that modern

planning, especially in the New Towns, failed to recognize the city as a unified visual and spatial composition, largely because it ignored the lessons embedded in the layered morphology of the historic city. Lynch shared similar concerns but pursued a more systematic theory of urban form. In “*The Image of the City*”, Lynch (1964) introduced the concept of the “mental image” as a legitimate object of planning analysis, derived directly from everyday inhabitants rather than technical experts. Through interviews and cognitive maps, he identified the “elements of city image,” a form of urban morphology shaped by lived experience and its temporal dimension. Lynch’s work also challenged core assumptions of conservation, raising questions about what should be preserved, why, and how, by showing that many preservation decisions reflected institutional conventions misaligned with evolving social needs. Yet Bandarin and Oers (2012) states that for many working in historic environments, his method appeared overly deterministic and risked replicating the mechanistic tendencies that had discredited the Modern Movement. A parallel line of thinking emerging from CIAM revived the older idea of *genius loci*, previously discussed by Geddes. Its most notable exponent was Christian Norberg-Schulz (1980), who drew on Heidegger’s phenomenology to define *genius loci* as an existential condition, an expression of the evolving relationship between people and their environment. Central to the view of Norberg-Schulz (1980) is Heidegger’s notion of *Räumlichkeit*, translated by Norberg-Schulz as “presence,” the spatial dimension of everyday life in which individual places together shape the environmental whole. Here, space becomes a locus, a lived setting, because life unfolds within it, (Bandarin & Oers, 2012).

At the same time, “context” emerged as a central concept in planning and architectural theory, partly as a reaction to Modernism’s crisis. Maurice Culot and Leon Krier criticized the damage inflicted on historic cities by modern development and advocated architectural styles rooted in traditional urban form (Culot & Krier, 1980; Krier, 1978). Culot worked actively to prevent the destruction of historic centres, while Krier later shaped the intellectual foundations of the Prince of Wales’s call for a return to traditional architectural languages (Jencks, 2011). These ideas contributed to the rise of the New Urbanism movement, especially influential in the United States. Although widely supported by the public and many intellectuals, these approaches struggled to produce an architectural language that was neither purely vernacular nor a direct replica of historical forms.

During the same period, Colin Rowe advanced an influential alternative in *Collage City*, (1978), arguing for a productive balance between conservation and contemporary design. For Rowe, new architecture must engage the familiar, memory-laden context from which it emerges, and the method of “collage” offered a way to establish a methodological symmetry between old and new fragments of the urban fabric. Robert Venturi, one of the most innovative American architects of the post-war era, also placed context at the centre of his

work, emphasizing its role in conveying meaning beyond individual buildings (Venturi, 1977). Venturi rejected simple stylistic replication and instead supported a modern design language capable of harmonizing with a context characterized by historical layering and productive dissonance. Building on these ideas, Thomas Schumacher (1971) introduced the concept of “Contextualism”, which sought a middle ground between immobilizing historic cities and replacing them entirely. By examining how historic cities evolve through accretion, Schumacher proposed a design methodology derived from this incremental process, free from nostalgia for vernacular forms.

These debates unfolded as architects increasingly recognized that the Modernist aspiration to control and rationalize urban processes was itself illusory. This realization spurred new interpretations of the fragmented and contradictory nature of contemporary cities, epitomized by Rem Koolhaas’s (1994) *Delirious New York*. Through a “retroactive manifesto” for Manhattan, Koolhaas (1994) reassembled the city’s disparate strategies, programs, and historical layers into a coherent analytical framework. This exercise made visible the “ideal states” and archetypes that shape the city across time, revealing the overlapping visions embedded within its complex urban fabric. Tschumi (1998) states that none of the utopian ideals of 20th century has materialized and none of the social aims has succeeded. The ideas turned into redevelopment nightmares and social aims in bureaucratic policies.

As Bandarin and Oers (2012) explain, this period was shaped by two major changes. First, growing dissatisfaction with Modernism sparked an active debate among architects, planners, and public officials as they searched for better ways to design and manage cities, debates that helped define the social, physical, and cultural goals of post-war urban conservation. Second, an international conservation movement began to take shape, building its own institutions and establishing shared principles and methods. By the 1960s, it had become clear that Modernist planning, applied in a standardized and rigid manner, often produced low-quality housing, monotonous urban spaces, and increased social marginalization, especially when compared to the more vibrant and enjoyable public spaces of historic cities. The Modern Movement itself recognized its crisis, CIAM held its final meeting in 1959, and grassroots critiques, such as Jane Jacobs’s influential work (1993), amplified calls for approaches that respected historical patterns, spatial meaning, and social bonds. Although Modernist ideas continued to influence planning in various regions, including India and Latin America, the movement’s driving force had largely dissipated.

Following the aging Masters works, architectural historians such as Colin Rowe in 1940, were interested in exploring “the ideas behind the form” and more explicitly the classical continuity in Modernism, while Zevi in 1950 promotes the “Organic” synthesis by expanding the principles of Frank Lloyd Wright (Curtis 1996). In fact Wright (1975) notes that “a building

should appear to grow easily from its site and be shaped to harmonize with its surroundings if Nature is manifest here, and if not try to make it as quiet, substantial and organic as She would have been were the opportunity Hers.”

In summary, the common discussion themes were reliance to the past, lessons from the traditional city. By the end of 1970s as Curtis (1996) p.16) states “*..it was fashionable to suggest that the way to move forward laid in going back*”. This part of history referred to as post Modernism which despite the rhetoric about the “*end of an era*” proved to be quite ephemeral, was characterized by arbitrary recipes to achieve this aim through approaches like Revivalism or Mannerism where any period of the past was at game.

Historical monuments and heritage were granted a dual status: fragments of knowledge and pleasure placed in disposition for all, and cultural products fabricated, packaged and diffused with a view toward their consumption. This according to Choay (2001a) shows metamorphoses of their use value into economic value.

2.1.7 Revivalism - urban management ideals after Modernism

By the end of 1970s it was fashionable to suggest that the way to move forward lays in going back. Despite the rhetoric about the end of an era, postmodernism proved to be ephemeral. Curtis (1996) p.16. cites: “*either through Revivalism or through Mannerism, any period of the past was in Game*”.

Among the many Recommendations issued by the UN-HABITAT Conference in 1976, the following concern the existing urban fabric:

‘Recommendation B.8 Improving existing settlements:

(a) Settlement planning cannot merely focus on new urban development for many settlements already exist. The improvement, renewal and rehabilitation of these settlements should therefore be continuous. They thus present a major challenge in improvement of quality of life, and of the existing fabric of settlements. When ill-conceived it may result in the destruction of the economic and social fabric of entire neighbourhoods.

(b) Settlements must be continuously improved. Renewal and rehabilitation of existing settlements must be oriented to improving living conditions, functional structures and environmental qualities. The process must respect the rights and aspirations of inhabitants, especially the least advantaged, and preserve the cultural and social values embodied in the existing fabric.

(c) Special attention should be paid to:

(i) Upgrading and preserving the existing stock through the development and use of low-cost techniques, and the direct involvement of the present inhabitants;

(ii) Undertaking major clearance operations only when conservation and

rehabilitation are not feasible and relocation measures are made;
(iii) Providing for the welfare of the affected inhabitants especially with respect to employment opportunities and basic infrastructure;
(iv) Preserving the area's social and cultural fabric which may be the only de facto source of social services including care of children and the aged, maternity care, apprenticeship, employment information and security'.

Several architects were as Bandarin and Oers (2012) state “*precursors of the Urban management ideals after Modernism*”. “*Architecture for the Poor*”, showed to the architects and planners that alternative solutions for the conservation of historic cities in many parts of the developed, and developing world.

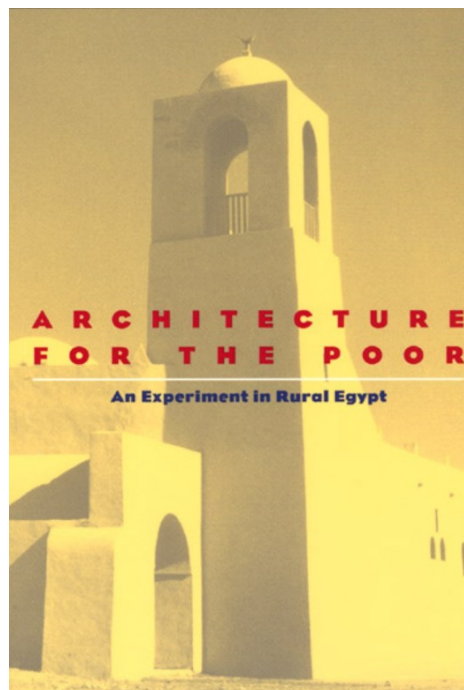


Figure 2-21 Book Cover, Fatti (1973) promoted the use of traditional materials and techniques in rebuilding vernacular settlements

The management of cultural heritage based on values is crucial for making informed decisions. The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (Australia ICOMOS 2013a) provides a framework that explicitly addresses multiple, sometimes conflicting heritage values, relevant issues, and other values. This approach enables the identification of priorities, such as the overarching objective of preserving significant attributes, while considering factors such as site constraints, resource limitations, and statutory requirements. The success of the charter, which has been widely adopted in Australia and internationally, can be attributed to its highly flexible and adaptable values-based approach, which can be applied to a diverse range of places and changing circumstances.

The General Conference of UNESCO adopted the Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) in 2011, representing the culmination of the HUL approach. HUL refers to groups of buildings, structures, open spaces, and archaeological and cultural heritage sites that constitute human settlements in an urban environment over a relevant period of time. The HUL approach sees the city as a multi-layered structure in time and space. This layering includes a site's topography, geomorphology, hydrology, built environment, infrastructures above and below the ground, open spaces and gardens, its spatial organization and visual relationships. The 2011 Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape does not replace existing doctrines or conservation approaches; rather, it is an additional tool to integrate policies and practices of conservation of the built environment into the wider goals of urban development in respect of the inherited values and traditions of different cultural contexts. It displays a methodology on how to move from an object-based to a landscape-based approach, in order to better integrate landscape protection and urban planning toward a balanced and sustainable urban development. It recognizes the city as an historic layering of cultural and natural values and attributes including its surrounding context.

Jokilehto (2010) traces the origins of the definition "Historic Urban Landscape, HUL" to derive from the Vienna Memorandum (2005) while initially, considering HUL to have been embedded on the definition of 'historic areas' in the 1976 UNESCO Recommendation concerning Safeguarding and Contemporary Role of Historic Areas. Gathered due to various problems detected in and around World Heritage cities, the Vienna Memorandum proposed a new approach to the analysis and valorisation of historic cities. It's premised on the belief that the planning and management of urban landscapes requires an understanding of the history, culture and architecture of a city in its spatial and temporal context, and on the introduction of contemporary construction that acknowledges inherited patterns. Besides its conceptual approach, the notion of HUL also comprises the historic urban area consisting of layers of cultural and natural values and characteristics, constructions, and open spaces (squares and green areas) as well as its spatial organisation and visual relations. It associates the historic core with its wider territorial context and its geographic location.

Over the last decades an affirmative approach to the management of the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) has been taking hold, one which takes into account the historic city as a living organism that keeps changing within its spatial, social and economic context.

This includes (1) social and cultural practices and values, economic processes, and intangible heritage that contribute to the city's specificity and identity, (2) the needs of the local community in terms of a culturally and environmentally sustainable development as well as (3) the transparency of the management system. The Historic Urban Landscape encompasses the World Heritage property with its buffer zone and setting. The latter

contributes to the preservation of its spatial and visual integrity. This links the objectives related to urban heritage preservation to those related to social and economic development.

Due to uncontrolled development in the setting, the Historic Urban Landscape Recommendation (UNESCO World Heritage, 2011) puts forward the preservation of the quality of the entire urban area, guaranteeing a balanced and sustainable relationship between the urban and natural landscape, and the strengthening of the productive use and promotion of social and functional diversity. In order to strengthen the approach to HUL management, the UNESCO recommendation identifies activities that require the participation of three key groups of stakeholders: the public, private and civil sectors.

Based on the 2011 UNESCO Recommendation, Rey-Pérez and Pereira Roders (2020); (Veldpaus & RODERS, 2013) identified the main concepts of HUL answering the questions as below:



This study shall deal only with the first question exploring the heritage historic layers and main attributes shaping the historic urban landscapes of the selected case studies.

More recently, international practitioners have emphasized the importance of considering existing cultural contexts to develop models that align with different value systems and traditions. In HUL there is a strong emphasis on being inclusive and having all stakeholders around the table. Particularly, it focusses on community involvement in all stages of the process (Pereira Roders, 2019).

All other elements of the urban structure such as social and cultural practices and values, economic processes and the intangible dimensions of heritage as related to diversity and identity should be taken into account in heritage management and territorial planning

(UNESCO 2011). Undoubtedly, one of the most critical steps is to understand this layering system of the city. To provide a deep understanding of the protected area, and also to enable an efficient monitoring of the site, an effective inventory consisting of historical studies, visual and formal analysis, mapping of cultural practices and identities, socio-economic and morphological analysis might be necessary (Hosagrahar, 2015) p. 251–255.

In summary, based on the historic transition moments analysed in this chapter, several fundamental shifts in the urban psyche are observed:

1. The Aesthetic Phase: Where the historic fabric was viewed through the lens of "the picturesque" or individual architectural merit.
2. The Conservationist Turn: When the city began to be treated as a collective heritage requiring active preservation.
3. The Modernist movement: When the city was conceived as a machine for living.
4. The awareness on the surroundings: Where the focus shifted beyond the physical structure to include the surrounding landscape, culminating in the formalization of the buffer zone to safeguard the visual and functional integrity of the historic core.

This analysis reveals that the "buffer zone" of historic centre is not merely a modern regulatory addition, but the logical conclusion of centuries-long process: that a historic city cannot be preserved in a vacuum.

Chapter 3

Buffer Zone Normative and Function

This Chapter aims at explaining the normative and applicative framework that is to be used in developing the regulatory indicators on modes of intervention in the following chapter. The chapter enclose normative framework of the Buffer zones in international and Albanian context. It proceeds with registrations of urban realities and buffer zones based on empirical studies conducted in selected case studies in Albania. It also intends to deconstruct the notion of buffer zones in describing modes of intervention in different buffer types. The relationship between the territorial planning and architectural and urban conservation in Albanian context is discussed in this chapter.

3.1 The concept of Surroundings and Buffer zones normative in the World Heritage Context

Throughout the history of the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, the protection of the “surroundings” of World Heritage properties has been considered an essential component of conservation strategy. However, the Concept “Buffer Zone” was first introduced in the context of protected natural sites, the buffer zones aimed at creating a buffer between the protected core area and the surroundings. In the 1970s, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) started to enhance the use of buffer zones as a tool in the management process of natural protected areas (IUCN, 1975-1976).

However, the concept gained significant traction in the context of World Heritage sites, particularly after the World Heritage Convention of 1972, which recognized the need to protect not only the designated monument but also its surroundings and wider context. All along the history of implementation of the World Heritage Convention, the protection of the “surroundings” of the inscribed properties was considered an essential component for the conservation strategy, for cultural and natural sites alike Organisation (2008) Today, the buffer zone is considered an important tool for the protection of the integrity of the OUV of the designated world heritage core as well as for the conservation strategy, for cultural and natural sites alike.

But, how does the concept and normative of the buffer zone relate to the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) in the context of World Heritage sites?

Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), as defined in the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, refers to “cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations of all humanity.”⁷⁰ For a site (property) to be inscribed on the World Heritage List, it must demonstrate OUV by meeting at least one of the ten selection criteria adopted by the World Heritage Committee.⁷¹

OUV is demonstrated and justified through a process that identifies and substantiates the values of a particular site through its attributes. Attributes are the aspects of a property that convey or express its OUV. They include both tangible and intangible characteristics that reflect the significance of the site, such as physical features, construction materials, spatial organization, land use patterns, traditions, knowledge systems, and related cultural

⁷⁰ UNESCO, 2023, para. 49.

⁷¹ Such criteria include both cultural and natural dimension

practices.⁷²

The attributes identified for a property derive from the Statement of Outstanding Universal Value and from the justification of the criteria under which the property is nominated. They are fundamental to understanding the authenticity and integrity of the site and constitute the primary focus of its protection, conservation, and management. In essence, attributes render the values of the site intelligible, appreciable, and protectable at a global scale.⁷³

OUV encompasses attributes that may be located both within the core zone of the property and within its buffer zone. Buffer zones for World Heritage properties are clearly defined and managed areas established under relevant legal frameworks, which provide an additional layer of protection for OUV. Although they do not form part of the World Heritage property itself, they are essential for safeguarding its values. Buffer zones include the surrounding environment and, in some cases, elements of the broader landscape that influence the integrity of the site. They also function as key areas for assessing how proposed developments may affect the OUV of the property.

The concept of the buffer zone is also incorporated in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention as one of the elements to be considered when preparing a nomination dossier for inscription on the World Heritage List. Buffer zones protect both the tangible and intangible attributes that convey OUV from external threats. Thus, even though the World Heritage property itself is protected, the surrounding area must also be subject to control and management, as activities within this space may negatively affect the property's OUV.

When the UNESCO World Heritage Convention was implemented in the late 1970s, many sites were already protected by surrounding protection areas under national legislation. These functioned similarly to buffer zones even if they were not always formally called that.

Several early sites (1978–1980) had surrounding protection areas, for example: Historic Centre of Kraków (1978), City of Quito (1978), Historic Centre of Florence (1982). These cities already had **urban planning protection belts** that effectively worked as buffer zones.

As a Conclusion Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) refers to cultural or natural significance that transcends national boundaries and is of importance to all humanity. According to

⁷² UNESCO, 2019; de la Torre, 2013

⁷³ <https://www.heritageadapts.org/glossary/outstanding-universal-value-ouv>; The Guidance Manual “Preparing World Heritage Nominations”, Attributes can be tangible or intangible. The Operational Guidelines indicate a range of types of attributes that may accompany OUV, including: form and design; materials and substance; use and function; traditions, techniques and management systems; location and context; language and other forms of intangible heritage; and spirit and feeling (Paragraph 82).

UNESCO requirements, its recognition requires:

- Fulfilment of at least one of the ten criteria (i–x), of which (i–vi) are cultural criteria and (vii–x) are natural criteria⁷⁴.
- Integrity (for both natural and cultural properties)
- Authenticity (for cultural properties)
- Appropriate protection and management mechanisms

The basis of the OUV lies in the attributes which are the concrete and identifiable elements that express the OUV. Without clearly defined attributes, OUV cannot be demonstrated. Examples of attributes are monuments/historic buildings, urban structures/spatial layouts, cultural landscapes, natural systems as well as place-related traditions and practices. The World Heritage Property (Core Zone) is the area where the attributes that convey OUV are located and which is subject to direct legal protection.

The Buffer Zone is the surrounding area of the World Heritage property that does not necessarily contain the principal attributes but serves to protect the context, visual setting, integrity, and environmental conditions of the site. The buffer zone does not exist independently; rather, it functions to safeguard the attributes of the property. By protecting these attributes, the OUV is preserved. If the attributes are damaged or compromised, the OUV is endangered, which in turn may threaten the site's status under the World Heritage Convention. Figure

⁷⁴ *The ten Criteria for selection of World Heritage Properties are explained in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention and are reviewed periodically by the World Heritage Committee. The criteria are as follows: (i) to represent a masterpiece of human creative genius; (ii) to exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design; (iii) to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared; (iv) to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history; (v) to be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change; (vi) to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (The Committee considers that this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria); (vii) to contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance; (viii) to be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features; (ix) to be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals; (x) to contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.*

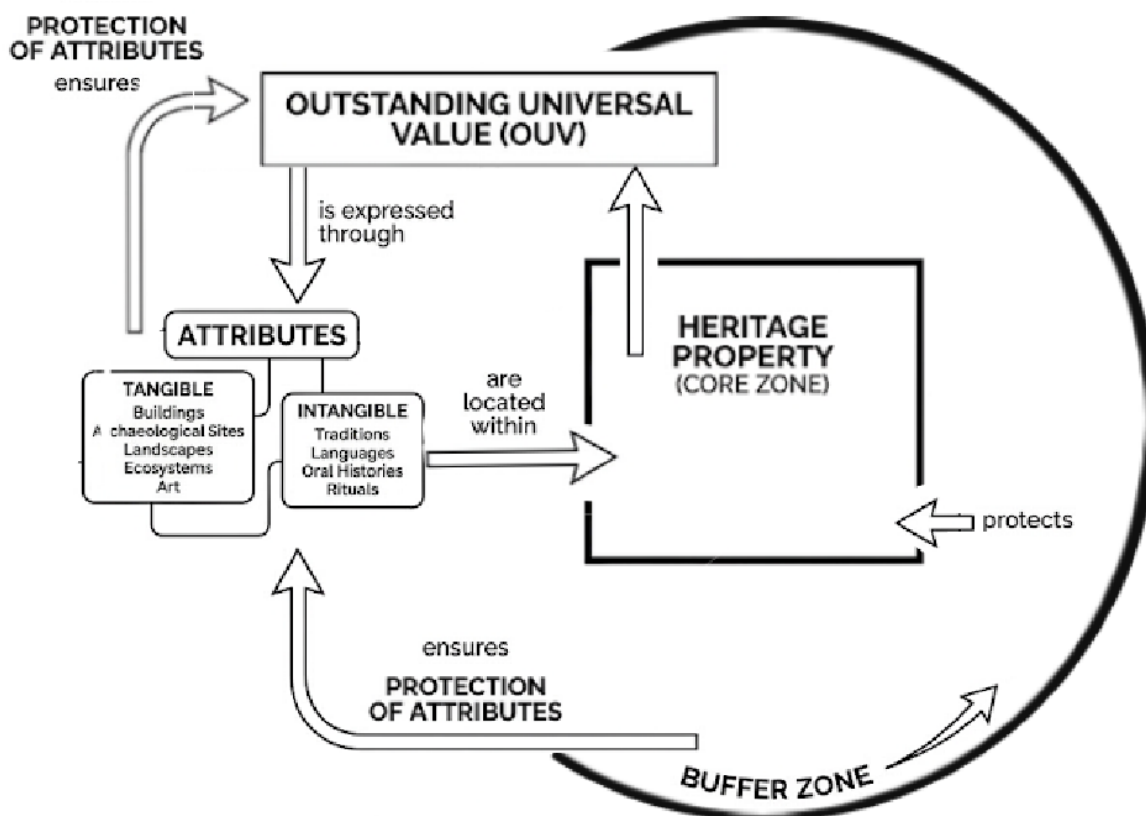


Figure 3-1 – Scheme showing relation between OUV – Attributes and the role of Buffer zones in the protection of Attributes that convey the OUV

Table 3-1 – Explanation of the scheme in Figure 3-1

OUV	<i>is expressed through</i>	Attributes
Attributes	<i>are located within</i>	Heritage Property (Core Zone)
Buffer Zone	<i>protects</i>	Attributes
Protection of Attributes	<i>ensures</i>	OUV (Integrity & Authenticity)

The convention emphasized the need for buffer zones to protect the nominated sites from external influences and ensure their long-term conservation. The buffer zones are designed to provide a buffer against the negative impacts of tourism, urbanization, and other external factors that could compromise the integrity of the heritage site. The buffer zone was

introduced in the 1980 in the operational guidelines, encouraging all natural and cultural nominations to include buffer zones in the nomination file. In 2005 the buffer zone was made a mandatory part of the nomination proposal (World Heritage Centre, 2005) (Schlee, 2017).

Leitao (2011) explains that the first nomination file to mention that a buffer zone was in place was that of L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site in Canada in 1978. The first urban settlement with a buffer zone was the Island of Mozambique, nominated in 1991. The Kathmandu Valley and the Old City of Dubrovnik, both inscribed in 1979, have buffers that were included after an extension of the properties in 2006 and 1994 respectively. The ICOMOS evaluations of the Historic Centre of Mexico City and Xochimilco (1987) and the Historic City of Sucre (1991) refer to the existence of buffer zones, although there is no mention of them in the nomination files. In the case of Old Rauma (1991), there is no reference to a buffer zone either in the nomination file or the ICOMOS evaluation, but only in an appendix to the latter. As these cases show, the assumption that a buffer zone was identified at the time of inscription is based on different sources as already explained. It also shows that even when a buffer zone exists, it may differ considerably in its content, that is: a) it may have been established intentionally as a buffer zone; b) it may have been described by ICOMOS as a buffer zone at the time of evaluation though not designated as such at the national level; or c) it may have been identified as a buffer zone only for the purposes of nominating the property without real management implications.

Currently nominations for World Heritage status may include or not a buffer zone however they need to technically justify its role or its omission (Marshall, 2011).

Historic centres are inseparably shaped by tangible heritage elements such as buildings, infrastructure, and wider urban / rural context, as well as intangible heritage elements such as the evolving use patterns and the socio-cultural values and collective memory that are essential in defining the spatial relationships, sense of place, identity, community belonging and social cohesion.

In this context, the concept of buffer zones has been extensively studied and debated in academic and professional circles, with scholars examining their effectiveness in managing the relationship between heritage sites and their surrounding environments. Due to the fact that they are seen as a critical component of heritage management, it is very important that a buffer zone is created based on a thorough study, since each buffer zone is interrelated with the world heritage site for which it is created, and as such it is unique. It is of outmost importance also to understand that buffer zones are not only It is of outmost importance, also to understand that buffer zones are not only spatial in character, in most cases they are living zones with many stakeholders at stake (such as inhabitants, owners of properties and economic activities) that are impacted by the limitations that may follow the designation of

the area as buffer zone (Sakellariadi, 2013).

As shown in Figure 3-2, the notion of Buffer zones has developed over time. Different approaches have been followed and employed in different regions of the world for the delimitation of the buffer zones. Buffer zones, in some cases have been established through legal or regulatory frameworks, while in other cases they have been established through informal arrangements between communities, governments, and other stakeholders. Today buffer zones are considered as an important tool for the preservation and protection of world heritage sites and a promotor of the sustainable development in the wider context of the surrounding area.

The timeline should not be understood as a linear or automatic legal progression, but rather as a layered evolution of norms operating at different regulatory levels: expert doctrine, binding international laws, and UNESCO soft laws. These layers interact over time, yet they do not function hierarchically, nor does their chronological succession imply direct or automatic incorporation into domestic legal systems.

The early documents, including the Athens Charter and the Venice Charter, belong to the realm of expert-based doctrinal texts. Drafted by professional communities rather than states, they are not legally binding instruments. Their authority is epistemic and disciplinary: they articulate conservation principles, such as the importance of setting and contextual integrity, and shape professional standards internationally. At this stage, the concern for the surroundings of monuments remained conceptual and normative, grounded in conservation philosophy rather than enforceable regulation (Jokilehto, 2013).

A different normative category emerges with the adoption of the World Heritage Convention, which constitutes binding international treaty law. States Parties undertake legal obligations to protect and conserve heritage of Outstanding Universal Value. However, the Convention itself did not initially define buffer zones in precise terms. While it establishes an international legal framework, its implementation depends on national legal systems, administrative capacities, and planning instruments. The existence of treaty obligations does not in itself ensure uniform domestic translation.

Subsequent developments, including the Nara Document on Authenticity, the Vienna Memorandum, and the Historic Urban Landscape Recommendation, belong to the domain of soft law. These instruments are not treaties and do not create binding obligations under international law. Nevertheless, they exert significant normative influence by interpreting, refining, and operationalizing the Convention. In particular, the 2008 revision of the Operational Guidelines formalized the definition and requirement of buffer zones within the World Heritage system. Even so, their implementation remains mediated by national governance structures and planning regimes (ICOMOS, 1994; Stovel, 2019; UNESCO, 2005;

UNESCO World Heritage, 2011).

The emergence of the buffer zone concept should therefore be understood as the result of progressive normative consolidation across distinct but interconnected spheres: professional doctrine, binding treaty law, and soft-law guidance. Its institutionalization reflects increasing stabilization within international heritage governance, rather than a simple chronological translation of international texts into national law.

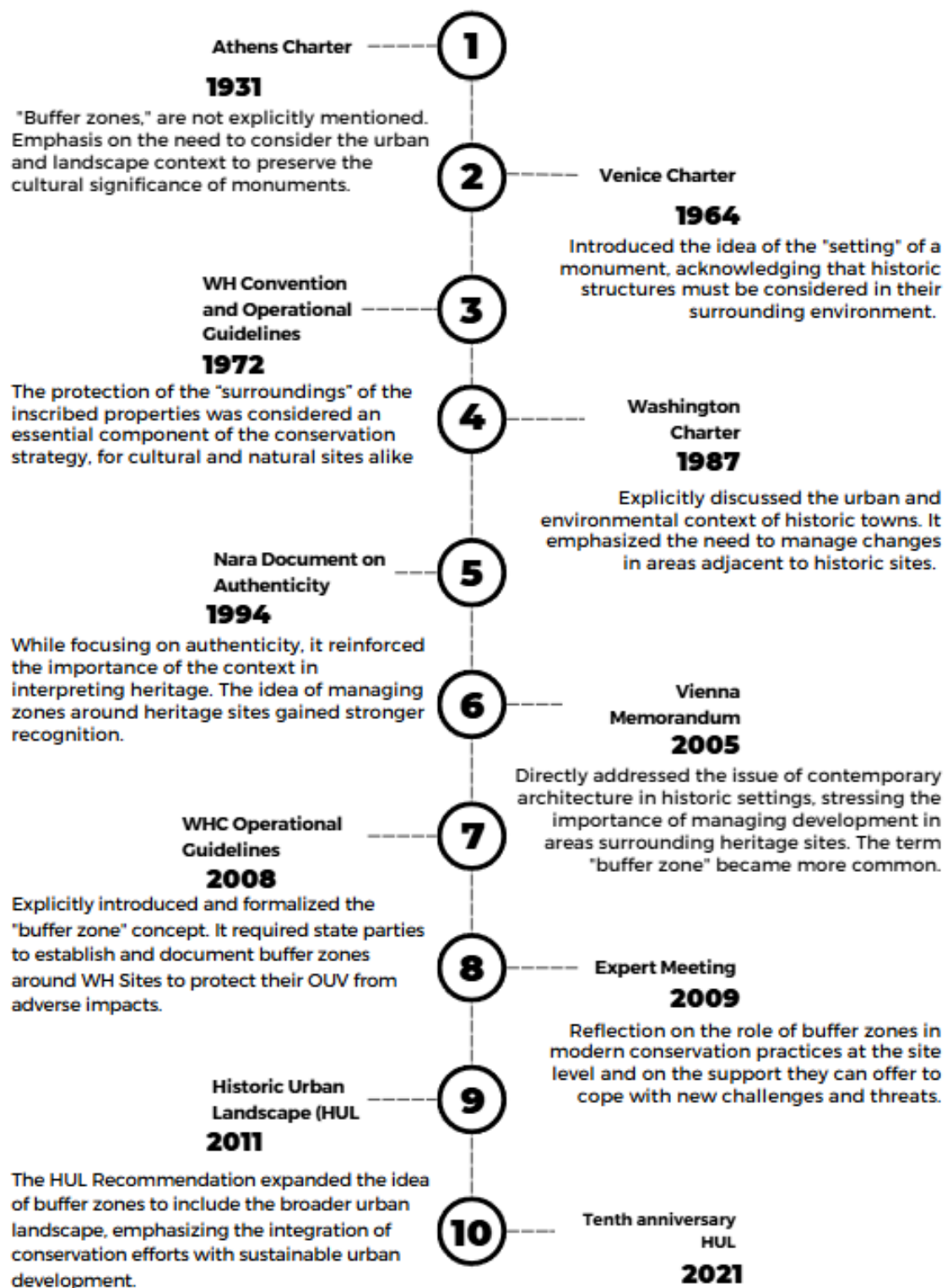


Figure 3-2 - Timeline of evolution of the historic setting concept and institutionalization of the Buffer Zone concept in international heritage conservation (1931–2021). The diagram illustrates the differentiated evolution of contextual protection in heritage conservation, distinguishing between expert doctrinal charters, binding treaty law, and UNESCO soft-law instruments. The buffer zone concept emerged through layered normative development rather than direct chronological legal codification.

If the relation between a heritage site and its surroundings can be conceptually understood as a relation between the “old” and the “new”, it is necessary that the normative view explained above to be grounded or complemented with a disciplinary viewpoint. Regarding this topic, Purini (2000) notes that there is a general rule that indicates that a new building is the continuation of an architecture that existed before. In this sense, each project has been a continuation of an existing project and the beginning of a future project. This vision of the relationship between the new and the existing seems somehow deterministic, in the sense that it seems that the new would be conditioned to the point where it would not be possible to speak of freedom of interpretation from the interventions that overlap traces present.

In the chapter *“Construction as a continuation”*, Purini (2000) emphasizes the need to create a strong and prolonged dialogue between the new architecture and the preceding / existing. The relationship between the new and the existing does not always develop as a dialogue. Stating that sometimes this relationship seems like a clash, Purini mentions Ernesto Nathan Rogers as one of the scholars who has emphasized the relationship that must be established between the existing as found by the architect and the transformation the architect seeks. He refers to the act of “building in the city” as a critical act that somehow establishes a new reality, at the very moment when it introduces an architectural intervention in the territory it acts. The new becomes contaminated with the existing, the existing is changed by contact with the new, the new incorporates the existing and generates a third entity. Architectures that enter a context that can be considered as a real palimpsest, have the possibility to radically modify the meaning of the existing elements by adapting them to the new interventions. Purini (2000) identifies such an action with the architecture project and explains it in three phases.

1. Knowledge of the existing
2. Acquiring the existing, through an empathic process
3. Creating differences or more precisely giving a new identity to the existing one already recognized as such).

Indeed, here is where the disciplinary discourse in architecture relates with the normative discourse. What Purini states as “knowledge of the existing” is one of the issues stressed also by Giovannoni (1931) as knowing or understanding “the character of the city”. He states that there inevitably exists a geometric scheme or a style however seen together there exists a concrete correlation between the infrastructural and architectural elements created together with the city as part of a unique conception. The city can be as such imagined as a

great architectural work that fulfils the Vitruvian conditions *utilitas*, *firmitas* and *venustas*.⁷⁵ Giovannoni (1931) highly stresses that humans do not improvise complex systems but rather study them, further develop and apply them. Theories (including the utopian ones) that aim at establishing the specific formal concepts and put them in order are more harmful than utilitarian since they try to assign a unique form to what is complex and variable as such, they rather detain the life in geometric schemes removing the real artistic character and realistic responding to utilitarian purposes.

Knowledge on the existing forms also the basis of the values-based approach to cultural heritage sites which was first introduced by The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (Australia, 1979), and which offers a framework in which multiple, sometimes conflicting heritage values and other values and relevant issues can be understood and explicitly addressed. Now the values-based heritage management is part of the current discourse on cultural heritage as it provides a basis for good decision making for cultural heritage places. The following figure displays the first two steps of understanding the significance of the heritage place before making any decision.



Figure 3-3 Scheme showing decision steps in understanding significance (Source: Australia Icomos 2013)

(Choay, 2001b) raises the issue that architects recall that one time a variety of styles have coexisted, been juxtaposed and interconnected in the same city or the same building. The

⁷⁵ Three basic requirements that Architecture, according to Vitruvius but also to Alberti, should fulfil three basic requirements: it should be functional, have maximum solidity and durability, and be elegant and pleasing in its form. Jokilehto, J. (1986). *A History of Architectural Conservation* University of York, England]. <https://www.iccom.org/publication/history-architectural-conservation>

[files/380/history-architectural-conservation.html](https://www.iccom.org/publication/history-architectural-conservation)

history of architecture from the period of the Romanesque to the flamboyant Gothic and Baroque is readable in several of the great religious architectures in Europe. The appeal of a city like Paris comes from a stylistic diversity of its architecture and its spaces. These should not be frozen in time by an approach to conservation but rather continued as in the case of the Louvre pyramid. As for their owners they demand the right to dispose freely of their properties, to derive from them whatever pleasures or profits they choose.

The concept of Value

When claiming modern cities to be aesthetic organisms (Giovannoni, 1931) highlights the contribution of 19th cent. scholars such as Sitte⁷⁶, Buls⁷⁷ and Gevaert together with the German school in affirming this artistic character of the cities. They showed the great responsibility taken by the modern civilisation in transmitting to future generations the emerging new urban agglomerations devoid of any artistic thought. It is however Riegl who brings about a fundamental conceptual innovation, one that has influenced thinking on heritage up to today: interpreting the conservation of monuments through a theory of values. Bandarin and Oers (2012) and Choay (1992) state that it is with the work of Riegl, that heritage is finally associated with modernity. Similarly, Albania adopted an approach based on historic value (time of construction) in categorizing monuments to be designated in 1948 (the first List). When in 1961 Albania listed the minor architecture and urban settlements other types of values were used for the categorization such as typological value, geographical distribution value and uniqueness value.

The heritage significance of such a historic centre as cultural heritage, its importance for society, can be understood as the sum of diverse values ascribed to these elements (also known as 'attributes' in the case of World Heritage), individually and as a group, by different stakeholders. 'Unpacking' the importance of a cultural heritage place in this way (values, who holds them and what attributes convey/express these values) informs management decision making for the place itself but also improves understanding of what interdependencies the designated cultural heritage area has with its wider setting. The establishment of a buffer zone around designated urban historic areas has become widely accepted practice in order to help to preserve the broader setting of the historic townscapes and is considered beneficial and often very necessary for the gradual transition from historic areas, with specific limits in terms of management, towards the broader urban areas. Buffer zones play a crucial role in the conservation of World Heritage properties. Throughout the

⁷⁶ Artistic principles of cities, cited in Giovannoni, G. (1931). *Vecchie città ed Edilizia nuova*. Tipografia Sociale Torinese.

⁷⁷ Buls. C., (1894) *L'esthétique des villes*, Bruxelles; ID., (1895) *La Construction des villes*, Bruxelles cited in ibid.

history of the World Heritage Convention, safeguarding the areas surrounding inscribed sites has been recognized as a fundamental element of conservation strategies, for both cultural and natural heritage.(UNESCO)

The concept of value directly links to the aim of this research that buffer zones should be determined based on a values based approach. The identification of values and attributes that convey the values is applied in the analysis of case studies in Chapter 5.

3.2 The concept of Surroundings and Buffer Zone normative – Overview in Albania

This section seeks to explore key aspects of the discourse on urban conservation, including its conceptual, legal, and institutional frameworks, both before and after the 1990s. It examines the continuities and ruptures that have shaped urban conservation practices throughout this transitional era. The research addresses a series of questions regarding the development of specific legal and institutional instruments, their relationship with urban planning, and the transformation of this framework until the early 2020s.

To better structure the analysis of the key shifts in preservation policies and practices when dealing with urban heritage in Albania, this section employs a set of topics as a framework for comparing the pre- and post-1990 periods. The main sections are:

A. Legal and Regulatory Frameworks: This topic examines the evolution of laws, decrees, and regulations related to urban heritage. It analyzes the transition from a centralized, state-controlled system to a more decentralized model involving both public and private actors. A short section on the foundation and consolidation phase (1948-1980) preceeds the analysis with the aim to contextualize the initiation of the decline period in 1980s. The research also attempts to assess whether the effectiveness of preservation policies and efforts has been influenced by the political ideology of the time. Definitions and concepts related to historic built areas, such as “monument,” “museum-city,” “urban ensemble,” and “protected zone,” were defined and used within the framework of cultural heritage protection in Albania during the communist period. By highlighting analogous concepts like “historic centre,” “buffer zone,” and “urban built heritage” used in international professional debates, the study aims to situate the preservation theories and policies of communist-era Albania in relation to contemporary international approaches.

B. Institutional Roles and Actors: This topic traces the changes in the institutional framework and their role towards shaping urban conservation. It contrasts the powerful and centralized role during the communist era of the Institute of Cultural Monuments (IMK), a

national scientific institution with the fragmentation of responsibilities and the involvement of new actors, such as non-governmental organizations and international institutions, in the post-1990 period.

C. Practical Application and Challenges: This section analyzes the on-the-ground reality of urban heritage preservation. It examines how preservation policies were applied in practice, highlighting both the successes of large-scale documentation projects and the persistent challenges posed by informal constructions, underfunding, and the pressures of a market economy (Tsenkova, 2014).

After the fall of the communist regime in 1990, as noted by (Aliaj, 2009; Biberaj, 2019; Krasniqi, 2022), Albania has undergone profound political, economic, urban and social transformations. Despite this, it is surprising to note that the post-communist transition period remains one of the least studied in terms of historical, political and social transition and their complex processes of change (Aliaj, 2009). Similarly, limited research has critically analyzed the main shifts that the field of heritage protection and preservation in general and urban conservation in particular have undergone during this time of rapid urban development and radical political change.

Existing studies on the protection of cultural heritage in Albania (Kosta, 1986; Meksi, 2004; Papa, 1972a, 1972b; Riza, 2002), have primarily focused on the foundation and consolidation of preservation policies during the 1960s and 1970s as well as Albania's adherence to international frameworks such as the Venice Charter, the UNESCO Convention etc. Scholarly attention has rightly emphasized the significant contributions of pioneering conservators and restorers in the first decades of the communist regime, particularly regarding the establishment of heritage conservation concepts as well as the extensive work undertaken during that period on the protection and preservation of cultural monuments.

In contrast, post-socialist transformations in the heritage field have often been examined either through the lens of re-evaluating the socialist past or in relation to the neglect of cultural heritage caused by development pressures during the transition period. Main sources of information on the development of the last three decades are legal acts changes, published restoration works as well as periodic international reports, which tend to lean towards narrow thematic narratives or political reporting and statistics rather than towards in-depth professional and comprehensive analysis.

3.2.1 The legal and regulatory framework: from centralized control to decentralized administration

Albania is the last country to declare the independence from the Ottoman Empire in 1912.

With the establishment of a constitutional monarchy, the country showed a clear will to detach from the Ottoman legal system, aspiring toward a modern legal system inspired by European models. This fragile modernization period ended abruptly with the communist takeover in 1944 and the imposition of a Soviet-inspired legal system. However, in the field of cultural heritage, little was done during this early period (Meksi, 2004; Orhani, 2016; Papa, 1972a; Riza, 2002; Thomo, 2025).

While the first legal norm emerged relatively late compared to international developments, nevertheless, the fast start of Albania immediately after World War II with the first legal designation of the national list of 148 monuments (1948) as well as designation of four museum cities in (1961) reflects Albania's engagement at the time with the international discourse on preservation. It also highlights the country's specific political and social context shaped by the establishment of a new state order under the communist regime. (Strazimiri, 1971) states: *"The Party has defined the role of the cultural heritage of our people as one of the main sources for the education of the working masses and listed this issue among other important issues of socialist construction."* This statement, like many others frequently encountered in publications of the period, illustrates that political ideology formed the basis for the renewed attention to cultural heritage in Albania after World War II.

1948-1980: Foundation and Consolidation.

From the establishment of the communist regime through the 1980s, efforts to preserve Albania's built heritage were conducted under a highly centralized system of state control. Decree-Law No. 586, "On the Protection of Cultural Monuments and Rare Natural Items", issued in 1948, is the first effective legal document on cultural heritage in Albania. While introducing main principles on designation, research, restoration of cultural monuments, it also adopted the first official national list of cultural heritage monuments, with 107 single monuments in four main categories: (1) castles and ancient settlements, (2) churches and monasteries, (3) bridges, aqueducts and caves, and finally, (4) monuments of Islamic faith. This early groundwork continued with Decision No. 130 of 1955, "Regulation on the Preservation of Cultural Monuments," which set out more detailed provisions for the designation, protection and restoration of monuments. While single monuments were designated by the rectorate of the University of Tirana, urban and architectural ensembles as well as group monuments fell under the authority of the Council of Ministers (Papa, 1972a).

In 1961, the first historic urban sites that were placed under state protection and designated as "museum cities" were the historic cities of Berat and Gjirokastra, the Bazaar of Kruja and the underground of Durrës. As (Riza, 2002) and (Meksi, 2004) note, these developments predated the Venice charter by roughly three years. The regulation of the Museum city of

Berat constitutes the first legal act on the protection of an urban ensemble and remained as a reference for the other three “museum cities” (Berat, Durrës and Kruja) for about 10 years up until their respective regulations were developed. These first legal acts formed the foundation basis for the protection and preservation of cultural heritage in the following years (Strazimiri, 1971).

The second monuments list published in 1963, included a considerably larger number of monuments showing the attention and research work undertaken towards the minor vernacular architecture. Conservation work on cultural monuments in general and built heritage in particular gradually and continuously expanded both in quantitative and qualitative terms until 1980s (Meksi, 2004), (Thomo & Riza, 1983).

Even though it is widely considered the formative phase for the foundation and consolidation of preservation policies, it is important to mention that there were also many historic buildings and sites that suffered from the ideology of the regime. The 1967 anti-religious campaign, led to the destruction of many historical sites with religious significance (Meksi, 2004; Riza, 2002; Thomo, 2025). Ottoman-style old bazaars in main cities like Tirana, Berat, Shkodra were demolished in the regimes first two decades to make way for new developments, justified by the claim that they lacked “emancipation” (Dhamo et al., 2019).

“They resented the squalor of the bazaar, which they equated with darkness and the despotism of an Ottoman past. Like an illness, the Ottoman vestiges in Tirana had to be eradicated.”(Mëhilli, 2017) p.188.

Law No. 4927, enacted in 1971, “On the Protection of Cultural and Historical Monuments and Rare Natural Heritage,” expanded the scope of protection and introduced legal provisions for interventions. This decree, along with the 1972 Regulation, aimed to solve a series of technical/administrative issues and to provide a wider meaning for the concept “monument” (Orhani, 2016). In November 1974, a decision by the Council of Ministers mandated the systematic identification and documentation of examples of vernacular architecture, with a goal of completion by 1980.

The main developments of this period are the shift from the privileging archaeological value to recognizing the duality of aesthetic and historic values, which enabled the inclusion of the minor architecture and historic urban sites within the designated heritage. As (Meksi, 2004) points out, the protection of the urban heritage as “museum cities” is a clear indicator of awareness of the monument as a concept inseparable from its surrounding environment.

1980-1990: Decline and collapse.

The final decade of the communist era was marked by the onset of economic crisis and persistence of isolationist policies in the country. The seriousness of the crisis was reflected

by a sharp economic decline, and low productivity (Biberaj, 2019; Krasniqi, 2022). These difficulties were also felt in the field of cultural heritage where funding constraints started to limit activity. Although economic problems became especially acute after the death of Enver Hoxha in 1985, some gains were nevertheless achieved in the early years of the decade. Among these was the designation of new urban sites and historic neighbourhoods in major cities as shown by Decision of the Council of Ministers no. 249, dated on 1 July 1980, “On the designation of the neighbourhoods and ensembles with architectural and historic values in the cities of Korca, Elbasani, Shkodra, Vlora and Tirana” (Thomo, 2025). This last period was still characterised by the expansion of the national list of cultural monuments including monuments tied to the party wartime political narrative, alongside positive developments such as the preparation of the first of the Albanian charter of restoration.

While these developments, were noteworthy within the constraints of the late socialist period and provided a basis for continuity, they could not anticipate the profound transformations that followed the regime’s collapse in 1990. The subsequent political transition and the establishment of a new economic system disrupted existing legal frameworks and undermined earlier ideologically driven initiatives, while opening opportunities for the reconfiguration of cultural heritage policies and institutions on foundations no longer dictated by ideological imperatives.

1991-2000: Post-collapse vacuum

Albania was the last East European Communist state to fall. The emergence of a pluralistic political system had brought a sense of exhilaration to many Albanians; however, as conditions deteriorated, this euphoria gave way to frustration, anger, apprehension regarding challenges of building a new system. Within one year alone (July 1990-July 1991) an estimated 100,000 Albanians fled their country, almost all of them illegally, a haemorrhage that coincided with economic collapse. (Biberaj, 2019) p.118.

Existing legislative framework and administrative structures were inadequate to meet the rapidly changing needs of the post-communist period. The cultural heritage was similarly affected, suffering a clear decrease of state investment and institutional care. As (Orhani, 2016) notes, conservation activities entered near stagnation throughout the 1990s, extending into the early 2000s. The work of the Institute of Monuments of Culture’s (IMK) and its regional ateliers – dependent on the central institute for both funding and project approvals - declined sharply. Reliable documentation of restoration works is largely absent for the period 1990-2002, and the journal ‘Monumentet’ suspended publication between 1990 and 1999, resuming only in 2000. According to (Shkreli, 2000), this period was particularly traumatic for the IMK due to staff resignations, insignificant salaries and institutional neglect.

Nevertheless, legal and institutional reforms gradually emerged. In 1994, the Law “On the

Protection of Movable and Immovable Cultural Assets” introduced first steps toward enabling third parties, including foreign institutions to conduct and finance excavation and restoration works. The post-communist transition was further destabilised in 1997 by the collapse of fraudulent pyramid schemes, which triggered violent unrest, and economic crisis (Biberaj, 2019) p.1; (Dhamo et al., 2019). Radical changes that happened in the spatial organization inside and outside the urban areas of the major cities, triggered a prolonged phase of transition due to the change of political system in Albania. As Dhamo (2019) notes, Tirana and other major cities suffered from a long phase of informal expansion, resulting in a “spontaneous city” surrounding the established urban core.

2000 - 2020 - Transition and Reforms

Systematic documentation of restoration activities, supported by concrete data, effectively resumes only in the period 2003–2013 following Law No. 9048, “On Cultural Heritage” (2003), which offered an integrated framework for both movable and immovable heritage. From the 2000s onwards, government initiatives have increasingly aligned with international heritage norms especially under UNESCO 1972 World Heritage Convention. The Historic centre of Gjirokastra was proclaimed a World Heritage Site in 2005 and was extended in 2008 to include the Historic centre of Berat as a serial site. It must be highlighted that periodic Decisions of the World Heritage committee on the world heritage sites have been an important instrument in shaping the legislative acts as well as in introducing requirements in the policy and professional practice areas.

The current Law 27/2018 “On Cultural Heritage and Museums” (Council of Ministers, 2018) represents a significant legislative update, aligning Albania’s cultural heritage framework with international standards, particularly those of the European Union. This law addresses critical gaps in the previous 2003 legislation by introducing key reforms.

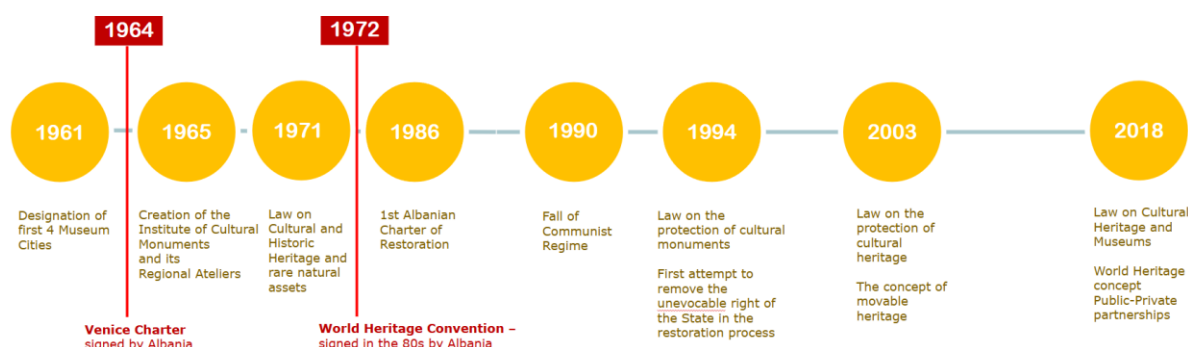


Figure 3-4 Timeline of national Legislation concerning urban heritage, main links to international legislation are shown in red.

As per national legislation (Law 27/2018 on cultural heritage and museums), designated cultural heritage sites should have a buffer zone that serves to preserve the cultural values of the historic site and also serves as transition zone towards the wider urban setting.

The list of Cultural Monuments in Albania (register of tangible cultural values) includes 2229 entries (cultural monuments of the first and second category) and 50 Cultural Heritage sites (that include Historic Centres, Ensembles and Archaeological zones). Cultural Monuments in Albania are divided into three main Fields: Archaeology, Architecture and Works of Art further divided into 15 genres and 99 different typologies. see Figure 3-5.

Currently, about 159 single monuments have designated protection zones, while the protected areas of Cultural Monuments, which are not specifically designated, are determined based on the Order of the Minister of Culture No. 297, dated 31.07.2015 "On the announcement of protected areas of Cultural Monuments".

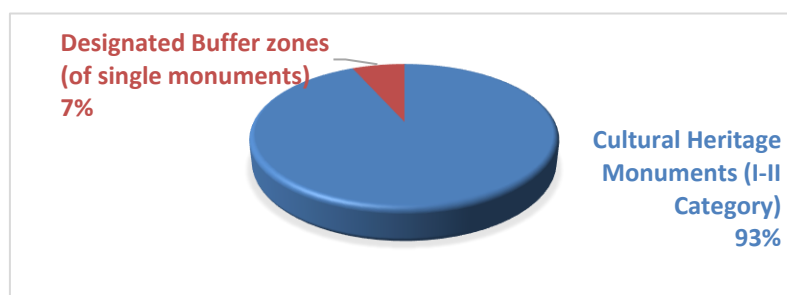


Figure 3-5 Chart showing the large number of cultural heritage sites in respect of the small number of protected / buffer zones designated for cultural heritage sites. Source: Adapted by the author basen on the national Monuments List.

Given that the above-mentioned Order is based on Law No. 9048, dated 07.04.2003 "On cultural heritage", which was replaced by Law 27/2018, there is a need to revise the related by-laws in cultural heritage. Based on Law 27/2018, Article 5, point.67: "Protective Zone" is a territory defined with clear boundaries, outside the historical center, architectural / urban ensemble, architectural complex and cultural monument, whose role is protecting the values of these cultural assets and providing light, perspective, cultural landscape, viewing, enjoyment and use by the public.

There are currently 21 declared historic centres and urban ensembles in the territory of Albania. These include urban and rural settlements. These heritage zones are declared through Decision of Council of Ministers. A list is provided in Table 3-2 where the change in the gradient colour refers to the changes the zoning / regulation of historic centres and buffer zones have been subject to. Frequent changes in regulations either mean that the existing regulation did not encompass the range of challenges or that arbitrary political will intervened for a change in regulation. As visible from the table Berat and Gjirokastra both World Heritage

Sites as well as Korça one of the main historic centres in Albania have undergone frequent changes in regulation in the recent years.

Table 3-2 List of proclaimed historic centres in Albania grouped as urban and rural settlements,⁷⁸
Each layer of red lines means that in the respective year (starting point of each red line) an amendment of the legal normative of administration of that particular historic centre happened.

Historic Centres in Albania		1961	1973	1980	2003	2005	2008	2011	2015	2016	2017	2018	2020 - 2025
Historic Urban Settlements	Berat (World Heritage Property)												
	Gjirokastra (World Heritage Property)												
	Old Bazaar of Kruja as Museum City												
	Underground of Durrës as Museum city												
	Shkodra												
	Vlora												
	Korça												
	Elbasan												
	Tirana												
	Pogradec												
	Permet												
	Bilisht												
	Himara												
	Voskopoja												
	Konispol												
Historic Rural Settlements	Bënjë Village												
	Vuno Village												
	Dhermi Village												
	Qeparo Village												
	Rehova Village												
	Theth Village												
	Kanina Village												
	Rabdisht Village Peshkopi												
	Lin Village (World Heritage Property)												

LEGEND

Legal Normative in Force
for the proclamation, zoning and administration of the Historic Centre / Historic Ensemble

While the understanding of boundaries of urban units involves an analysis of visual and spatial relationships, speaking of historic buildings, definition of boundaries is applied when designating them and their surroundings under protection. In the framework of Albanian legislation on cultural heritage the preservation of the "surroundings" of designated properties has generally been recognized as a necessary element of the conservation strategy. Generally, a specific space is drawn around single historic building named as protected zone or buffer zone. However, due to inflexibility of normative concerning developments in buffer areas (no new development is allowed within buffer areas), coming to designated properties in dense urban contexts, this protected area is often limited to the same historic building yard or is not designated at all.

⁷⁸ Source: National List of Cultural Heritage Assets (Cultural Monuments and Sites), (2026).
<https://iktk.gov.al/pasuri-kulturore/>

3.3 Governance: From Centralized Authority to Fragmentation

The 1948 first legal act on cultural heritage in Albania was introduced by the Institute of Sciences. Alongside it, the first national list of monuments was compiled, and a small operative structure was created to oversee conservation. By 1955 this had developed into a research department and an atelier dedicated to state-funded restoration works. In 1959, responsibility shifted to the Institute of History and Linguistics at the university of Tirana, which broadened the criteria for monument designation to include aesthetic and historic values alongside archaeological ones. A specialized “Tangible Culture Group” was also created, complemented in 1962 by regional ateliers established to address the growing number of conservation work. However, as Strazimiri (1971) observed, this first foundational phase relied largely on empirical rather than scientific knowledge.

A decisive institutional turning point came in 1965 with the establishment of the IMK, Institute for Cultural Monuments (Instituti i Monumenteve të Kulturës). The IMK’s primary role was to strengthen and systemize the monument protection and restoration. It started its work by placing restoration activities on a scientific basis, requiring that all interventions from 1966 onwards be preceded by studies and intervention projects (Strazimiri, 1971).

During its first decade, the IMK consolidated its technical, financial and human resources supported by increased state funding and qualification of staff. Regional Ateliers, dependent on the IMK, contributed to the implementation of restoration works. This direct dependence on the Institute created a centralization in the methodological and organizational plan for restoration interventions, which was considered a guarantee for the rigorous implementation of restoration criteria as well as for the rational distribution of state funds (Orhani, 2016). Information on the state of conservation of monuments gathered through inspection expeditions and local heritage custodians provided the basis for planning and prioritizing interventions (Adhami, 1976).

In 1971 the designation of monuments shifted to the Ministry of Education and Culture while the periodical “Monumentet” began publication as the official scientific organ of the IMK, addressing issues of art, history, architecture and restoration methodologies and practices. In the next two decades, teams of young specialists carried out extensive research to trace, preliminary document and protect monuments. Especially noteworthy were the 1974-1978 campaigns, which covered almost all urban and rural centres and gave particular attention to vernacular heritage.

Yet the collapse of the communist regime in the early 1990s brought profound disruptions. The emigration of hundreds of thousands of Albanians, including trained specialists, weakened institutional capacity across the country, and cultural heritage institutions were no

exception (Biberaj, 2019). The IMK became entangled in ambiguities and overlapping responsibilities with other bodies while local authorities saw their role in safeguarding monuments drastically reduced. Inadequate legislation, coupled with weak enforcement, left many sites exposed to illegal construction and uncontrolled alterations (Shkreli, 2000; Tsenkova, 2014). The regional Ateliers entirely dependent on the IMK both financially and technically, lost their function with the transition to a market economy, further reducing restoration capacity. In this context, debates emerged on the need to restructure the IMK both in its internal and external structure *“as its internal structure and organization no longer corresponded to the functions and responsibilities”* (Shkreli, 2000). The proposals called for transforming district Ateliers into Regional Directorates of National Culture to achieve more homogeneous territorial coverage, strengthen technical expertise, and reduce inefficiencies (Orhani, 2016). At the same time, the liberalization of the heritage sector after 2005 allowed licensed private enterprises, religious institutions, and NGOs to participate in conservation activities under the supervision of the IMK and the Ministry of Culture. While this diversification brought new opportunities, due to the limited experience in this direction, it also introduced challenges, including inconsistent professional standards and cases of damaging interventions.

In 2005, the Ministry of Culture, with UNESCO and financial support from the Italian Government, established the “Center for the Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Monuments.” This initiative aimed to train conservators employed in public institutions and to develop Albania as a regional hub for conservation expertise. Building on this initiative, the IMK inaugurated the Restoration School in 2007 to provide systematic professional training for young conservators and restorers, directly addressing a key UNESCO priority and helping to fill a critical skills gap in the country.

Albania has changed the administrative division of the country 3 times, most recently in 2014 (Krasniqi, 2022).

This territorial reorganization repeatedly exposed the limits of the Institute of Monuments of Culture (IMK), whose district ateliers operated more as technical brigades than scientific structures, functioning in practice as construction enterprises subordinate to the central IMK. With the transition to a market economy, these regional structures progressively lost their role, as low salaries drove away qualified specialists, leaving them reduced to “shelters of assistance” for unqualified workers (Shkreli, 2000). Moreover, maintaining over 200 employees without sufficient projects strained public resources that might otherwise have been invested directly in restoration activities. In this context, experts argued that district ateliers should be transformed into Regional Directorates of the IMK, under unified scientific criteria defined in Tirana, to ensure more homogeneous coverage of the national territory

and greater professional specialization. The management of historic centers and their integration into local development strategies also required the involvement of communities and municipal authorities. Yet, during this period the IMK struggled to adapt its structure and responsibilities to new demands. After 2005, reforms sought to overcome these limitations by introducing a hybrid model: the IMK remained the central hub of restoration activities, complemented by Regional Directorates of National Culture, all under the Ministry of Culture (Orhani, 2016).

As a conclusion, on the one hand, the most acute problems were related to the fact that the structure and internal organization of the IMK did not adapt to the function and responsibilities that this institution had to take on at this historical stage of the country's development.

On the other hand, this situation made it necessary that in the organizational plan, after 2005, the IMK functioned according to a new scheme, where the center of restoration activity was the Institute of Cultural Monuments itself and a number of Regional Directorates of National Culture distributed in several administrative centers of the country, which were subordinate to the Ministry of Culture (Orhani, 2016).

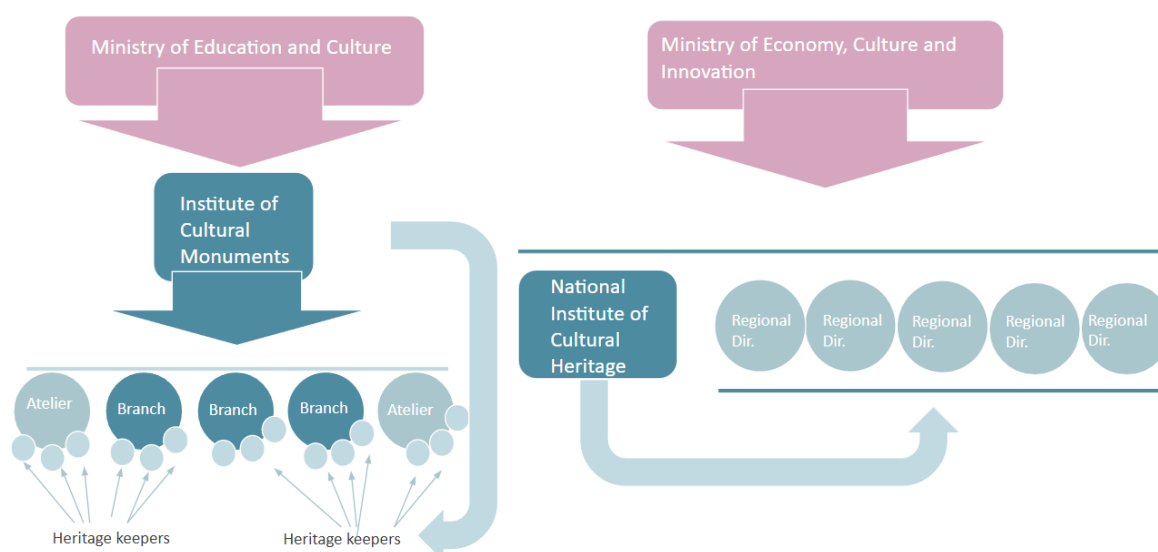


Figure 3-6 Changes in organizational structure for the administration of Regional Directorates of Cultural Heritage

Responsible institutions

Based on, Law 27/2018, Title II "Protection and Preservation, Chapter 2 "Protection and preservation", Section III - "Other forms of protection and preservation", Article 96:

Point 1: The Ministry responsible for cultural heritage, in relation to immovable cultural assets, as well as the Council of Ministers, for the grouped immovable cultural assets, have

the power to determine the protection zone, distances, measures and other norms that preserve the integrity of assets cultural immovables, individually or grouped together, perspective, light, environmental conditions and landscape.

Point 2: Environmental conditions and landscape are defined in cooperation with the ministry responsible for the environment.

Point 4: The extent of the Protection Zone is determined by the body that declares the cultural property, according to the study done by the IKTK or by another specialized institution.

Legal procedure

In support of Law 27/2018, Article 62, the proposal and definition of the protection zone of cultural assets is part of the declaration procedure of cultural assets.

The declaration procedure starts after the completion of the procedure of verification of the interest of the cultural property, a process which, in the case of immovable cultural property, is finalized by the Order of the Director General of the National Institute for Cultural Heritage (IKTK).

The proposal for the declaration of the protection zone of the immovable cultural properties for which the cultural interest has been verified, is carried out by the specialized institutions, and is included as part of the related file of the Request addressed to the Ministry responsible for the cultural heritage of the specialized institutions for the declaration of the cultural property. The following scheme presents the procedures clarified in Articles 59, 60 and 62 of Law 27/2018.



Figure 3-7 Legal Procedure scheme – designating buffer zones of single monuments (law 2018)

The procedure of declaration of immovable cultural property is concluded by Order of the Minister responsible for cultural heritage the protection zone of the property is determined, the intensity of the intervention, the importance of the cultural property and the necessary protective measures (Article 62, points 4, letter b, and point 5) (with the exception of grouped cultural assets which is adopted with Decision of Council of Ministers).

Based on Article 70, points 1 and 2, following the order of the Minister for the declaration of immovable cultural property, a Cultural Property Certificate is issued by the National Institute for Registration of Cultural Heritage, which must include, among other things, the Protected Zone of the Cultural Property.

Chapter 4

Modes of Intervention in Buffer Zones - INDICATORS

This chapter builds from the historical and theoretical analysis in Chapter 2 and the analysis of the buffer zone normative in Chapter 3 and informs the analysis of design approaches (case study analysis in Chapter 5) with several Regulatory and Design Indicators at both architectural and urban scale.

Building up from the historical and theoretical analysis in Chapter 2 and the analysis of the buffer zone normative in Chapter 3, this Chapter provides several results on the effects that modes of intervention between the “Old” and the “New” through history had in today’s historic cities. Based on these results it provides several indicators that shall be used in the analysis of design approaches (case study analysis in Chapter 5). Results coming from the analysis of design approaches in the surroundings of historic cities in Chapter 2, help formulate the Design Indicators. The results coming from the analysis of Normative in Chapter 3, help formulate the Regulatory Indicators.

Based on the fact that the issue of scale is discussed through the analyses, Regulatory and Design Indicators shall be grouped based on two scales – the urban scale and the architectural scale.

4.1 Modes of Intervention in Buffer zones

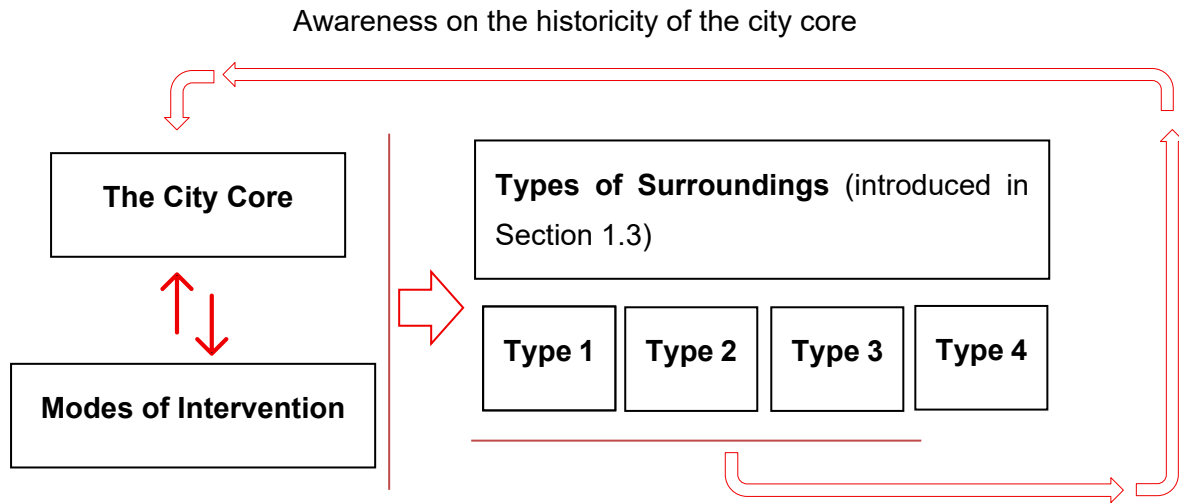
The historical and theoretical analysis in Chapter 2 shows that the awareness of the “old” as valuable, emerges when the modes of intervention in the existing city either caused a deep contrast with the pre-existing urban tissue or when new modes of intervention tended to erase the pre-existing urban tissue.

As explained in Section 2.1, while old and new built environments coexisted in any time and civilization, this duality became consciously recognized as a cultural issue during Renaissance through the awareness on a deep contrast between the two (Benevolo, 1971) (Jokilehto, 1986). Analysis in Chapter 2 shows that it was through different Modes of Intervention (or non-Intervention) in the “Old” city, that the Types of Surroundings (identified in the beginning of this research (Section 1.3) emerge.

As modes of intervention or design approaches through history are explained based on their tendencies of integration with the “Old” or erasure of the “Old”, it can be affirmed that it is the tendency to erase the “Old” rather than the tendency to integrate with it, that created the contrast between “Old” and “New” in the first place.

The following scheme shows this relation between modes of intervention and the creation of different types of surroundings and the indicators.

Table 4-1 – Relationship between the Modes of Intervention (analyzed in Chapter 2 and the Types of Surroundings / Buffer zones



A summary of the modes of interventions identified from the historical and theoretical analysis in Chapter 2 is found below in..Figure 4-1. As it is shown in the time line analysis, both tendencies of integration and erasure existed in all periods. What is different is the level of integration and the level / scale of erasure that is caused by different modes of intervention.

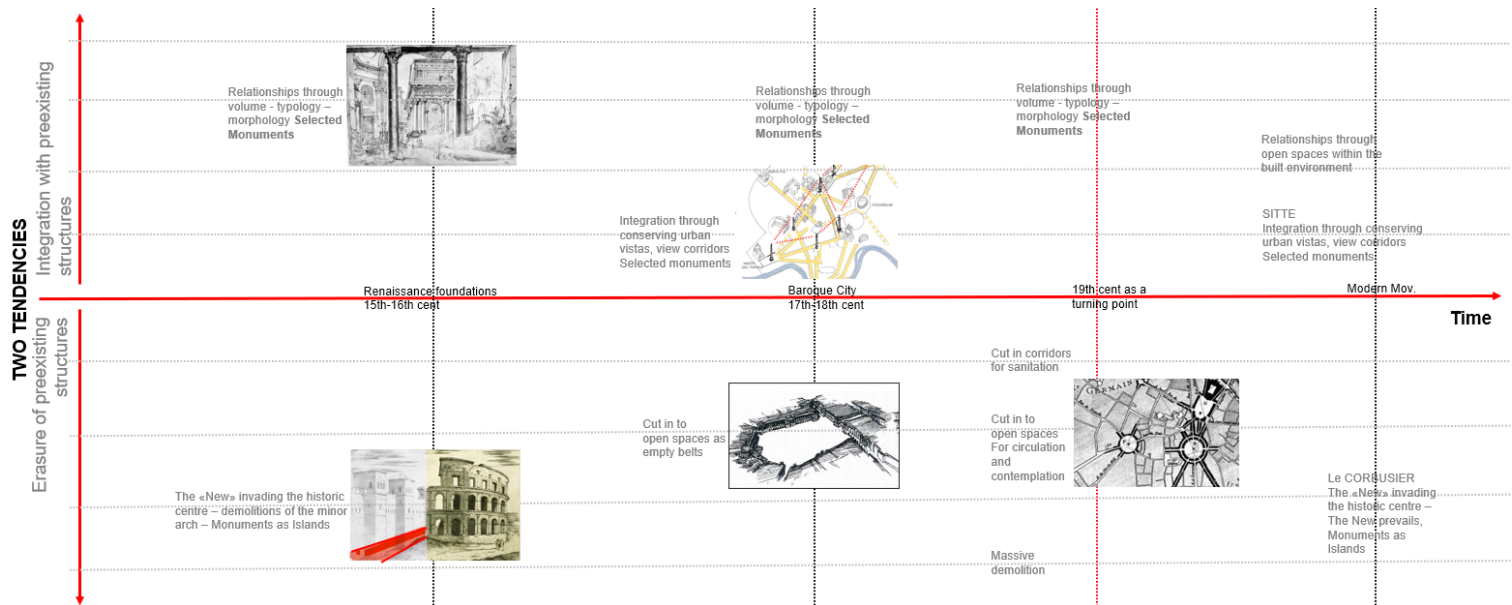


Figure 4-1 – Time line analysis showing modes of intervention in the different historic periods and their classification based on the two tendencies namely integration with the “Old” or erasure of the “Old”. The timeline is developed by the author based on the Historical and theoretical analysis in Chapter 2.

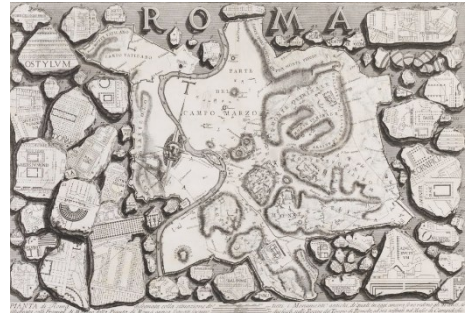
The section below shows results of the historical and theoretical analysis of intervention

approaches / modes throughout history.

This section builds up from the time-line analysis

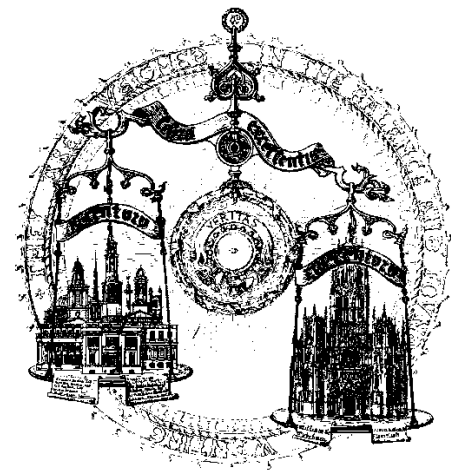
This section builds up from the time-line analysis and aims to understand each mode of intervention and the resulting conceptual surrounding / buffer.

“Buffer” as lacunae between fragmentary remnants of monuments (*historic city as archipelagos*).



Inspiration source:
*Plan of Ancient Rome, Giovanni Battista Piranesi, 1756*⁷⁹

“Buffer” as different typology and morphology contrasting with the Historic centre.



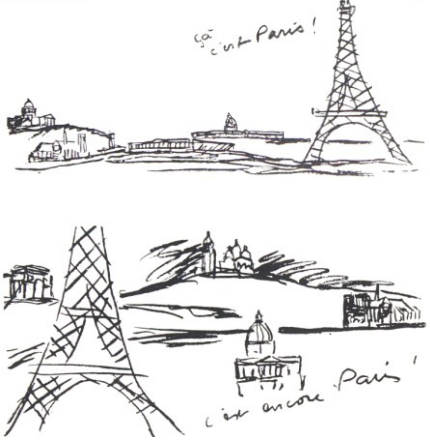
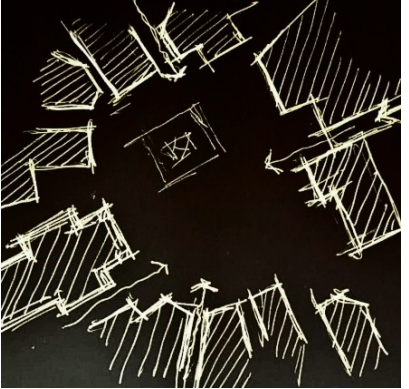
Source:
Illustration from: (Pugin, 1898), putting in balance the 14th century city and 19th century city

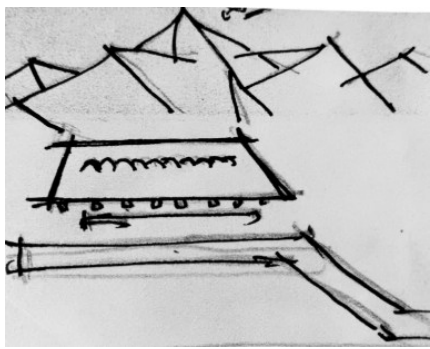
“Buffer” as wider setting with visual connections with the historic city (*historic city as silhouette*).



Source:

⁷⁹ <https://collections.carlos.emory.edu/objects/31196/>

	Conceptual sketch drawn by the author (tool Canva AI)
Historic city as “Buffer” disruptions due to different spirit of time.	 Source: (Corbusier, 1973b)
“Buffer” as space for contemplation and valorization of the monument.	 Hand drawn M.P.Demaj Inspiration Source: Le Corbusier “Voyages d’Orient” and Camillo Sitte approach
“Buffer” as view corridors and visual relationships.	 Hand drawn M.P.Demaj Inspiration – Historic Centre of Berat

	 <i>Hand drawn M.P.Demaj</i> <i>Inspiration: Historic Cexntre of Naples</i>
“Buffer” as relationship of the settlement with the natural setting.	 <i>Hand drawn M.P.Demaj</i> <i>Inspiration: M. Mitrojorgji project in north Albania in 1980s</i>

4.2 Indicators on Modes of Intervention in Buffer zones

This section builds up from results shown in Section 4.2 and provides several indicators in both urban scale and architectural scale on modes of intervention in buffer zones of historic centres or in immediate setting of historic urban areas. It is based on the dual analysis developed in both Chapter 2 (historical, theoretical and critical analysis) and Chapter 3 (analysis of Normatives on Buffer zones)

The indicators resulted from the analysis of the research until now shall be used to evaluate selected precedents, case study areas in the last Chapter. Precedents consist in selected

historic centres and selected design projects in the buffer zones or in the context of these historic centres.

Following the line of research where the scale of intervention is at the centre of the analysis, Indicators are grouped based on **Urban Scale (U)** and **Architectural Scale (A)**. Indicators are differentiated based on their character on whether they inform **Project Design (D)** or they inform **Regulatory Framework (R)**.

Conventionally Indicators are named firstly through their character (Design or Regulatory) and then based on the scale (Urban or Architectural). So an indicator of project design at urban scale is named as D-U #, while an indicator of regulatory framework at architectural scale is named as R-A #.

The indicators that shall be used for the comparative analysis of Project Design precedents in both urban and architectural scale are listed below:

D-U.1. Urban morphology

D-U.2. City views and vistas

D-A.1. Specific architectural features

D-A.2. Link to key historic phases of city development (building styles/genres/typology)

Indicator	Description
<i>D-U.1. Urban morphology</i>	<i>Does the project comply or disrupt with the urban morphology?</i>
<i>D-U.2. City views and vistas</i>	<i>Are there specific visual corridor protections, skyline limits, important views recognized?</i>
<i>D-A.1. Specific architectural features</i>	<i>Are there recommendations for materials, styles, architectural language to harmonize with historic surroundings?</i>
<i>D-A.2. Link to key historic phases of city development (building styles/genres)</i>	<i>Is there an emphasis on maintaining urban form, block structure, street patterns in buffer zones?</i>

The indicators that shall be used for the comparative analysis of regulatory frameworks in both architectural and urban scale are listed below:

R-U.1 Development Pressure Challenges

R-U.2 Existence of a management plan

R-U.3 Regulatory limits / control of urban tissue

R-U.4. Approach towards new constructions proposals

R-U.5 Governance

R-U.6 Community Engagement

R-A.1 Independent Assessments eg..UNESCO / ICOMOS etc.

<i>R-U.1 Development Pressure Challenges</i>	<i>Is the historic centre or buffer zone facing challenges like mass tourism, gentrification, development pressure, or infrastructural pressure?</i>
<i>R-U.2 Existence of a management plan</i>	<i>Is there a management plan in force?</i>
<i>R-U.3 Regulatory limits / control of urban tissue</i>	<i>Are there any regulatory limits for new constructions near or in the historic centre (height, volume, roofing, color etc)?</i>
<i>R-U.4 Approach towards new constructions proposals</i>	<i>Allowed / Not allowed? - Through Competition / or else?</i>
<i>R-U.5 Governance</i>	<i>Which authority is in charge for the administration of the property?</i>
<i>R-U.6 Community Engagement</i>	<i>Is the community engaged with the management of the property?</i>
<i>R-A.1 Independent Assessments eg. UNESCO / ICOMOS etc.</i>	<i>Did the city undergo World Heritage Impact Assessments or monitoring missions linked to specific projects?</i>

Chapter 5

Analysis of design approaches in Buffer Zones

This chapter is conceived as qualitative research based on analysis of different Cases of Buffer zones and precedents (design projects) in the buffer zones or in the context of heritage sites. It aims to analyse the interrelation between development and conservation based on the Regulatory and Design Indicators provided in Chapter 4 in both the Architectural and Urban scale.

5.1 Case Studies and Precedents in Albania

This section details the empirical research conducted across diverse case studies of settlements designated as cultural heritage sites in Albania. The selection of these sites is strategically aligned with the four conceptual types of "surroundings" presented in Section 1.3. The cases encompass surroundings of cultural heritage sites both **with** and **without** formal legal designation as buffer zones.

By treating these sites as "laboratories", the research examines how the imposition of normative boundaries, or the lack thereof, affects the integrity and the spatial-functional evolution of a site's setting over time. **This chapter uses the indicators derived from the analysis in Chapter 4.**

Objectives

The field work studies were undertaken with the main objective **to directly respond to the research's sub-questions** *"How do Buffer zones function in practice? What does their delineation mean for the historic city or cultural monument as an integrated system?"*

Based on this overarching objective, the following sub-objectives were set-up to guide the specific studies:

- (1) to examine the regulatory framework, particularly the relationship between cultural heritage protection and urban planning developments in two main historic periods (before the WWII and after the WWII) based on the four conceptual types of surroundings,
- (2) to investigate how this framework is applied in practice, specifically its spatial impact on the physical urban and rural surroundings of cultural heritage sites.
- (3) To determine whether the challenges identified at the outset of this research apply to the buffer zones of single monument typologies beyond historic centres.

The issue of scale remains in the centre of the methodology of the field studies. The interdependence and interrelation between urban and architectural scale is investigated in the empirical work.

Selection of case studies

To evaluate the legal and spatial challenges of buffer zones across Albania's diverse heritage, seven case studies were selected. These cases are organized into two phases: an initial core group representing three established "Museum Cities", namely: The historic centre of Berat, the old bazaar of Kruja, the ancient city of Durrës.

Among the three, the historic centre of Berat is a World heritage site (as a serial property with the historic centre of Gjirokastra), however it shall be analysed separate from Gjirokastra

for the purpose of this research. These are followed by a targeted expansion to capture under-represented typologies such as: the Historic centre of Tirana, 18 selected fortifications (belonging to the category fortified settlements) that hold the status of single monuments of culture but often are encountered as established walled inhabited units.

The selection is governed by three primary criteria:

1. Compliance with the research objectives

Historic settlements are in the research's focus, so the cases are selected to represent this category of heritage. Case studies include historic settlements that bear cultural heritage values and hold a protection status such as: "historic centre", "historic urban ensemble" or "cultural monument". As stated in Chapter 1, the aim of this research is to understand historic settlements not just whole in space but also whole in time, so cases are selected to be analysed not only in their current relationship with their surrounding buffer zones but also taking into account the dynamics of the relationship between "new" and "old" in their immediate surroundings through time.

2. Typological diversity

The cases represent a spectrum of urban and archaeological values, ensuring that the fieldwork findings are applicable beyond a single category of heritage and type of buffer zone:

Historic cities and urban ensembles: While all three Berat, Durrës and Kruja are among the earliest examples of museum cities in Albania (all three requiring a normative delineation of historic centre and buffer zone, they display particular characteristics in how the historic areas and buffer zones have been perceived and applied. Berat is a living UNESCO World Heritage site with uninterrupted urban life since 4th cent. bC. It is the earliest example of a designated buffer zone around the historic centre. Durrës presents an example of a museum city with a protection status that initially comprised both the underground archaeological area and a historic built area (mainly byzantine, ottoman and 20th century developments) but that later due to development pressures the protection status of the upper built layers was under evaluated leaving only archaeological area normative. It is included as an example of a particular conceptual type of buffer (the vertical palimpsest). The Old Bazaar of Kruja, represents an architectural ensemble that originated through an organic sprawl out of a walled settlement and that has functioned as a town's socio-economic core since the 17th century. It was among the earliest ensembles to gain the status museum city, however it never was equipped with a buffer zone delineation. This case is included to understand if particular effects in the surroundings of this ensemble resulted from the omission of the buffer zone. The Historic Centre of Tirana was included to provide evidence on buffer zones within a rapidly transforming capital city. Being representative of both conceptual types of "historic

accretion” and “projected extension” it is included to understand the dynamics in the surroundings of historic urban units that hold these characteristics.

Single Monuments: This category directly addresses Sub-objective 3, testing whether buffer zone challenges apply to single monuments. These cases provide further evidence to determine whether the spatial and regulatory issues encountered in historic centres are also prevalent in the surroundings of individual monuments. To strengthen this analysis, a number of fortifications (belonging to the category of fortified settlements) as well as one archaeological site (the Ancient City of Finiq, *Phoinike*) are included in the fieldwork.

3. Normative Precedent

The selection prioritizes sites with a long history of legal protection to allow for a longitudinal study of "buffer zone" evolution:

- **The after 1990s precedents:** Tirana is an example of an historic centre designated as such in 2007. It conserves though a number of historic buildings that are conceived either as part of consolidated urban units or as isolated from the surrounding built environment. As such it is a perfect laboratory to understand approaches of relationship between “old” and “new” even before the status historic centre was gained.
- **The 1961 precedents:** Berat, Durrës, and Kruja were among the first "Museum Cities" designated in Albania⁸⁰. This period introduced the buffer zone concept into national legislation, making these sites ideal for tracking regulatory shifts over six decades.
- **The 1948 precedents:** Due to the priority to age factor and historic/archaeological values, fortifications and ancient settlements were among the first genres of monuments designated in 1948. While the concept of a "buffer zone" was not yet crystallized, the 1948 designation included the immediate surroundings of the monument, marking the earliest nascent attempt of spatial protection in Albania. 18 selected fortifications are included to explore on this aspect.

The inclusion of Tirana and Finiq, was facilitated by ongoing research activities at the Faculty of Research and Development, Polis University. These cases provide the necessary empirical weight to determine if the spatial and regulatory issues identified in major historic

⁸⁰ The historic city of Gjirokastra was the fourth city to be designated as museum city in 1961.

centres are also prevalent in the settings of individual monuments in both urban and rural setting.

Table 5-1 Connection of each case study with the identified buffer area conceptual typologies.

Case Study Albania	Buffer Type 1	Buffer Type 2	Buffer Type 3	Buffer Type 4
Berat (Historic Urban Centre – WHP)	▲	▲		▲
Tirana (Historic Urban Centre)	▲	▲		
Kruja (Historic Urban Ensemble)		▲	▲	▲
Durrës (Archaeological Site – Ancient city)	▲	▲	▲	
Finiq (Archaeological Site – Ancient city)				▲
Prespa Region (Cave churches)				▲
Fortifications (Fortified settlements)	▲		▲	▲

While each case study aligns with a primary conceptual type of buffer area, many overlap across multiple categories due to the large size of their buffer areas. *Table 5-1* offers a panorama of the selected case studies based on the conceptual types of buffer areas that they apply to.

Selected cases of **historic accretion** in heritage cities in Albania, are Berat (World Heritage Site), and the Old Bazaar of Kruja.

Cases of **projected extension** in historic cities in Albania happened in two historic moments (1) in the period between the World Wars during the early 20th century, and (2) after WWII.

This study examined this relationship through two distinct case studies: Tirana, where new political and civic spaces were initially introduced at the edge of the Ottoman city and later became the dominant center, and Durrës, where reconstruction after the 1926 earthquake allowed for a rational reconfiguration of the historic city itself. It aimed to highlight main aspects that contribute to the argument on the relationship of newly introduced authoritarian urban models with the existing urban fabric. By comparing these cases, it explores how authoritarian planning (as projected extension) negotiated continuity and transformation of the existing city (not yet considered historic), resulting in urban forms that remain integral to the contemporary identity of both cities.

5.1.1 Berat, Albania

The most common growth of cities is the organic, gradual one. Cities grow eventually (Brand, 1995; Kostof, 1991; Moholy-Nagy, 1968). Referring to the so-called spontaneous urban formations, Giovannoni (1943) states that their creation and development was inextricably linked with the collective will of their inhabitants. In these cases, the urban form has been shaped and manifested slowly, following the general concepts of opportunity and aesthetics embedded in the culture and the spirit of the people of the time. As Camillo Sitte (1945) would say: it is a town that has grown in by slow steps, without any plan perhaps but under the supervision of a spatial sense on the part of successive generations of master builders.

The Historic Centre of Berat is an example of a city that is product of a collective and anonymous effort and elaboration.



Figure 5-1 – View of the city of the Historic Centre of Berat and its buffer zone. Source: photo of the author, (2022)

Inscription

The Historic Centre of Berat was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2008, expanding the property initially inscribed for Gjirokastra in 2005. These two historic centers are recognized together as a single serial property, valued as "rare examples of well-preserved Ottoman-era towns" in the Balkans. The Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) is protected under two Cultural Criteria of the Operational Guidelines:

Criterion (iii): Berat and Gjirokastra provide remarkable evidence of the diversity of urban development during the Classical Ottoman period.

Criterion (iv): The towns bear outstanding testimony to various types of monuments and vernacular urban housing during the Classical Ottoman period, in continuity with Medieval cultures, and importantly, in a state of peaceful coexistence with a large Christian minority, particularly pronounced in Berat.

Berat's distinct attributes include the castle (Kala), dating from the 4th century BC, although most of the current structure was built in the 13th century. The citadel area contains numerous Byzantine churches, mainly from the 13th century, which often

feature valuable wall paintings and icons. The town also preserves mosques built during the Turkish occupation, which began in 1417, and houses for religious communities, including Sufi brotherhoods in the 18th century. The presence of Berat Castle, mosques, churches, and the Gorica Bridge are central to the designated area's OUV.

The Historic Centre comprises three historic neighbourhoods Kala, Mangalem and Gorica. It is rather contained and includes also the green areas surrounding the slopes of the hills where the ensembles are located. The historic centre includes the area of the river between the two bridges. (UNESCO World Heritage, 2005, 2008) Ref 569bis,

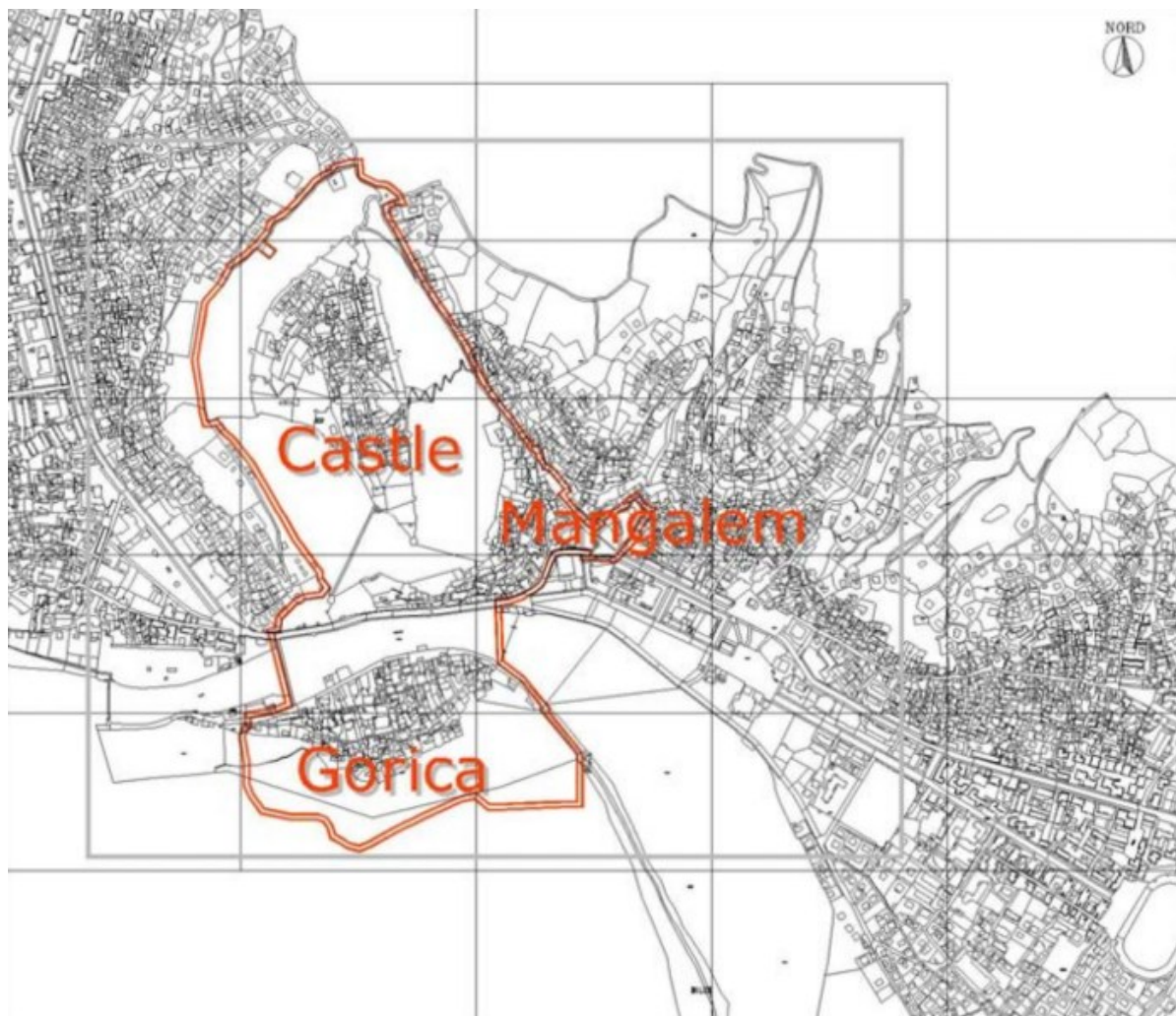
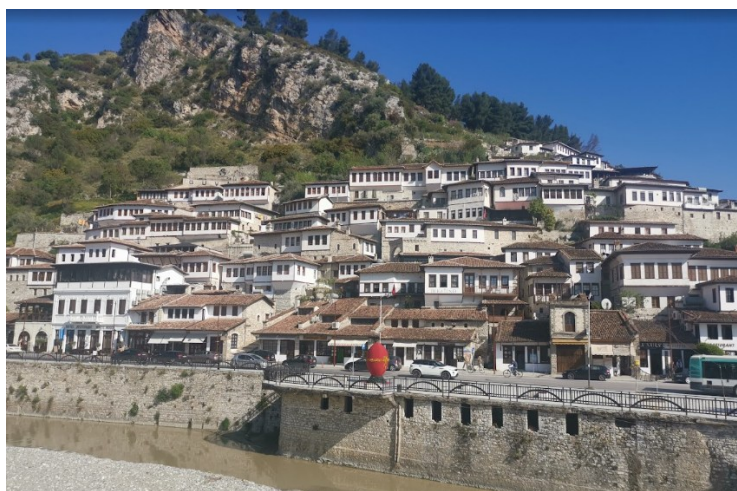


Figure 5-2 Historic centre of Berat- map showing the three historic neighbourhoods. Source: Joint Management Plan Berat and Gjirokastra 2028 - 2022

The Buffer zone comprises a large area in southeast that is towards the development of the contemporary city in the river valley. However, it includes examples of designated monuments as well as some early 20th century urban fabric and developments of the city during the communist period.

A series of attributes that convey the OUV are developed as a result of the advisory ICOMOS-ICCROM mission⁸¹. Consistency in territorial planning and management for both the property and the buffer has been a constant request in the UNESCO technical reports.⁸²

1. ATTRIBUTE: Refers to the morphology of historic neighbourhoods and their relation with the landscape (hill and river). The historic urban units are examples of an architectural character typical of the Ottoman period / Ottoman architecture, with tiered houses on the slopes, which are predominantly horizontal in layout, and make abundant use of the entering daylight - witness to the wealth and diversity of the urban and architectural heritage.



2. ATTRIBUTE: Refers to the original character as a fortified walled settlement. It features a castle, locally known as the *Kala*.



⁸¹ The mission 2016 involved organization of a workshop was: on “Development of Monitoring Indicators for the World Heritage Sites of Berat and Gjirokastra

Heritage Property “Historic Centres of Berat and Gjirokastra”. Tamas Feyerdy and Jukka Jokilehto were respectively the ICOMOS and ICCROM expert involved in the Advisory Mission 2016.

⁸²

3. **ATTRIBUTE:** Refers to vernacular architecture and their close relation to the topography. Building types adjusted to terrain - Examples of an architectural character typical of the Ottoman period.



4. **ATTRIBUTE:** witness to the coexistence of various religious and cultural communities down the centuries. Refers to the presence of different genres of religious buildings such as churches, mosques and tekkes in many cases coexisting very close to each other.



Architectural Diversity



18-19 Cent Ottoman period



20th cent.(before WWII)



Post-war apartment blocks as part of the projected extension in the buffer zone



Post 1990s constructions in the buffer zone

Figure 5-3 – Types of Buildings from different periods of construction in Berat

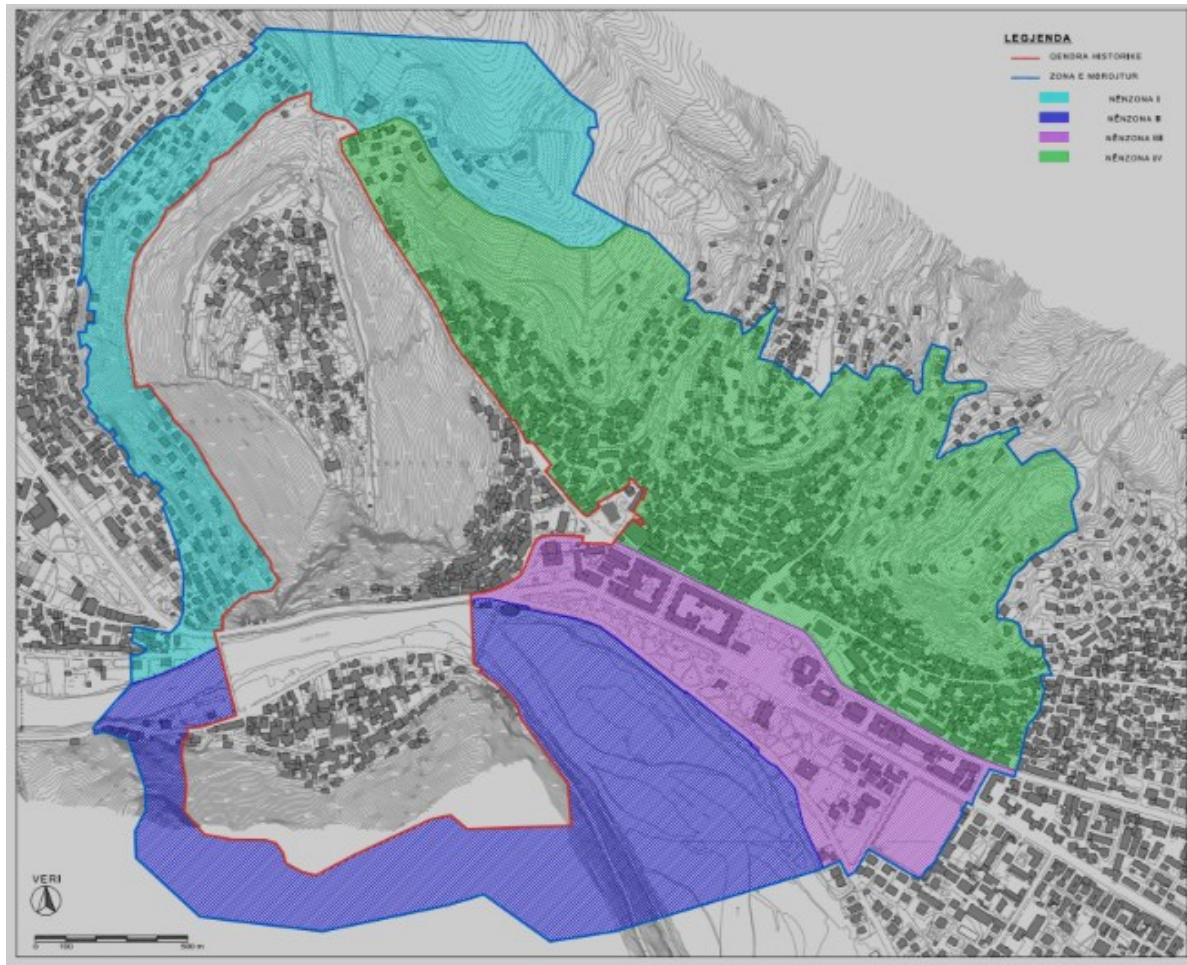


Figure 5-4 – Current Zoning Plan of The Historic Centre and Buffer zone of the World Heritage Site UNESCO, Source: National Institute for Cultural Heritage

As seen in plan, it is perfectly distinguishable which is the medieval historic centre and which are the developments during the communist regime, one being organic plan following the topography of the hill and the other being a linear development with orthogonal streets and cluster blocks of apartments.

The need for restrictions and specific regulations in the administration of land, buildings and wider territory within heritage designated historic areas is generally accepted at local level due to the high public awareness for the protection of cultural and historic values. On the contrary, determining development conditions in buffer zones of these historic sites may become object of concern locally, due to potential conflicts it may arise between the existing urban legislation, cultural heritage legislation and development and tourism pressures.

As of 2024-2025, Albania maintains a consistent and high political commitment to European Union (EU) integration, accelerating reforms under instruments like the Reform and Growth

Facility.⁸³ This accelerated economic activity is generating profound structural pressure on Berat's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). Tourism has surged, with Albania hosting 11.7 million visitors in 2024, number which consistently reported to increase each year. The resulting policy challenge is the timing: national development decisions are outpacing the implementation of necessary management tools. The World Heritage Committee has repeatedly expressed concern over the failure to fully implement the Integrated Management Plan (IMP) and the systematic non-compliance with procedural requirements, such as neglecting to submit project details for review prior to approval.⁸⁴

The primary risk identified is a regulatory-economic conflict. High growth and large-scale infrastructure investments, while economically beneficial, risk eroding the integrity and authenticity of the property before preservation mechanisms, specifically the Integrated Management Plan (IMP), now scheduled for completion by the end of 2025 [3], and mandated Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs), are fully functional and legally enforced. This report provides a detailed analysis of Berat's current administrative and socio-economic context, culminating in a comprehensive review of the infrastructure and development projects that have necessitated urgent intervention and discussion with UNESCO.

The overall integrity of the town is classified as satisfactory; however, this status is precarious. The integrity was "adversely affected by illegal constructions in the late 1990s," a historical vulnerability that requires heightened vigilance and strict enforcement today. This historical context means that any current procedural failure, such as the neglect of mandatory HIAs for new infrastructure, poses a direct and immediate threat of reverting the site to a state of conservation concern.

Authenticity is also deemed satisfactory, but the management framework requires strengthening. Specifically, preservation management must be "stepped up and carefully enforced" in line with international standards, particularly regarding urban construction management and the provision of visitor facilities. The need for sustained, rigorous action is underscored by observations that, despite its beauty, the castle is currently in a considerably damaged condition. This necessity for large, state-funded restoration projects implies a constant need for meticulous HIA scrutiny to ensure that modern restoration techniques do not compromise traditional materials or methods, maintaining the fragile authenticity of the property.

⁸³ EUROPEAN COMMISSION Brussels, Albania 2025 Report - https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/document/download/fe9138b7-90fe-4277-a12c-3a03f6d1957f_en?filename=albania-report-2025.pdf

⁸⁴ Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines

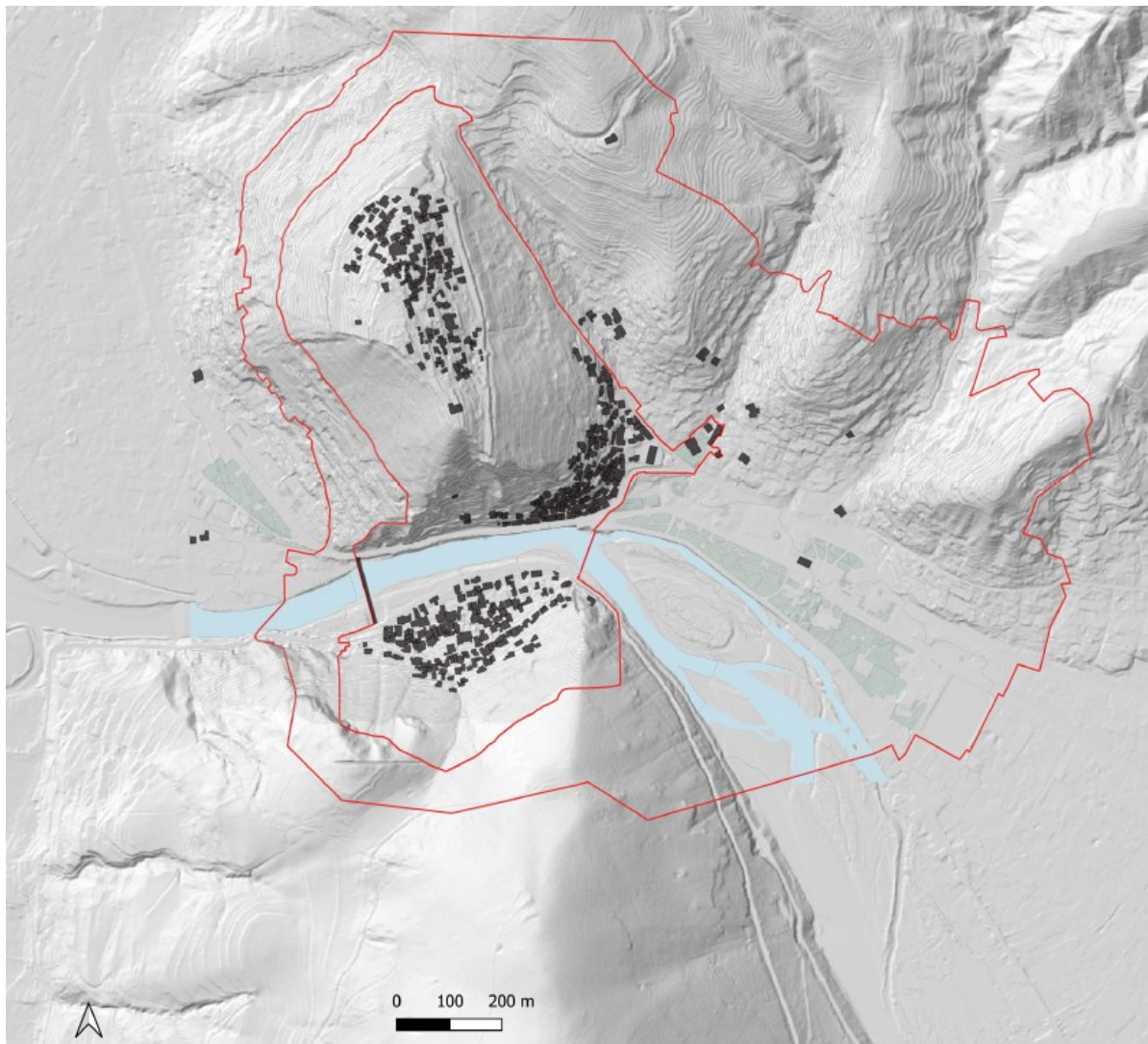


Figure 5-5 –Historic Centre and Buffer of Berat World Heritage site in relation to topography of the city. (Source: developed by the author)

Analysis based on Regulatory Indicators.

R-U.1 Development Pressure Challenges	Yes Post 1990s due to people movement from rural to urban areas. Today due to increase of touristic appeal of the city.
R-U.2 Existence of a management plan	Management plan is joint with Gjirokastra and it existed until 2013. Currently there is no management plan in force and there is a management plan in process.
R-U.3 Regulatory limits / control of urban tissue	Regulatory limits are based on regulation for the protection of the historic centre and are not detailed further in the spatial planning documents.

R-U.4.Approach towards new constructions proposals	Buffer zone is divided in 4 sub-zones based on the specificities of building and morphology. Subsequently different requirements related with height and volume of the buildings are effective in each subzone.
R-U.5 Governance	Top-down approach and the historic centre decision making is based on the decisions of the National Council of Tangible Cultural heritage, a collegial decision-making body headed by the Minister responsible for Cultural heritage. Main technical institution is the National Institute for Cutlural Heritage and there is a regional directorate of cultural heritage that functions as Site Manager. Links between the local government and the directorate for cultural heritage need to be reinforced.
R-U.6 Community Engagement	Not effective, only through formal public hearings.
R-A.1 Independent Assessments eg..UNESCO / ICOMOS etc.	Yes, subsequently requesting that HIA are developed before undertaking a development project that might negatively impact the WH property.

For several years, the World Heritage Committee has urged Albania to finalize and implement a comprehensive Integrated Management Plan (IMP) for the property, noting with "regret" that this crucial project had not been fully implemented. The delay in establishing this essential regulatory tool has created a management vacuum during a period of intense economic acceleration (UNESCO, World Heritage Centre). The situation has seen recent movement: the year 2024 marked the resumption of efforts to develop the IMP. The drafting process is currently led by the Polytechnic University of Tirana (UPT), with completion set for the end of 2025. The institutional responsibility for management and enforcement rests primarily with the National Institute of Cultural Heritage (IKTK), which serves as the contracting authority for the IMP. A central mechanism for managing change and preserving OUV attributes is the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA). HIAs are systematically required, particularly in response to increasing tourism pressures and the cumulative impact of development interventions.

Projects

UNESCO specifically requested the State Party⁸⁵ to undertake an integrated HIA to assess the impact of the "numerous infrastructure and development projects", including all individual ongoing projects within the Project for Integrated Urban and Tourism Development (PIUTD), both individually and cumulatively.

Table 5-2 Critical policy demands from the World Heritage Committee and the status of compliance.

Project	Required Action	Compliance Status
Management Planning	Update and finalize the Integrated Management Plan (IMP).	Resumed drafting (due 2026). Creates a vacuum during a time with high interest for investments.
Policy Alignment	Develop integrated urban conservation tool based on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) Recommendation.	Pending – it requires deep institutional restructuring away from conservation approach focused to single monuments towards holistic urban management.

5.1.2 Kruja, Albania

This section provides results of a field study focused on the Old Bazaar of Kruja which was developed by the author of this research.⁸⁶ This field study aimed to review how communities have used and interfaced with this historic landscape overtime and how today approaches to urban development can be enriched through a deeper understanding of values that this historic urban landscape bears and nature/culture linkages.

Introduction

Kruja is a small city in central Albania, located in the slope of Sarisalltik mountain, at an

⁸⁵ State Party based on the terminology of UNESCO are states that have adhered to conventions of UNESCO – in this case to the 1972 World Heritage Convention. Communications between UNESCO World Heritage Centre and the State Parties are done through the permanent diplomatic delegations of the State to UNESCO and the National Focal Point in Albania. In the case of Albania the Director General of the National Institute for Cultural Heritage is the focal point for UNESCO.

⁸⁶ Part of the results of the field work conducted for this case study were presented in the 9th AACCP (Architecture, Archaeology and Contemporary City Planning) symposium CHRONICLES OF EVER-CHANGING CITYSCAPES organized by the Department of Architecture DA-FAU, Polytechnic University of Tirana, November 2022.

elevation that ascends to an amount of 600 meters above sea level. The early medieval fortification rising over a steep and hilly terrain constitutes its urban core. Surrounded by bare and steep mountain peaks, the settlement was built over several small terraces around which, the urban centre is further developed resulting in today's city. Since it offered a good natural protection and strategic position to enable visual control over the surrounding area up to the nearby Adriatic coast, including the main route linking north and south Albania, the castle of Kruja had eventually an uninterrupted urban life, being one of the best known medieval fortifications in Albania. Favoured by its strategic geographic position, throughout history, Kruja has remained close to land and sea routes, maintaining optimal communication with Albanian and international centres.

The historic development of this urban settlement is inextricably tied with the human use, transformation patterns of the natural environment over two millennia and the cultural heritage values they have produced. The balance between these three components being: nature, culture and human use, have sustained lives without any of them being diminished in the process, or endangering the two others. The mountainous setting behind and the dominant location towards the town of Kruja are testimony of a great historical-natural unity, making the castle an integral part of a highly attractive historical-cultural-natural landscape.



Figure 5-6 - Kruja, sketch by Eward Lear (1848)

The city has undergone significant urban development in recent years, including the construction of new residential and commercial buildings, the renovation of historic sites and public spaces, and the improvement of transportation infrastructure. The city has also experienced an increase in tourism, which has led to the development of new hotels and restaurants.

The role of the old bazaar in the development of the open city

Considering that in Albanian territory the fortified settlements generally precede the open or un-walled settlements, the birth of the unfortified, therefore open city, has reappeared during the Middle Ages, around the 12th century. This phenomenon is essential towards shaping the cities' character, through transition from a strategic administrative and to some extent craftsman centre, to a centre in which the ever-increasing production factor was of paramount importance. The interconnection between fortified city and open city is clearly in favour of the latter, while the fortified settlement is either abandoned or remains as an inhabited unit of the open city such as Berat, Kruja etc. (Riza et al, 2019).

The bazaars, as the commercial heart of the open city, occupy an important place in urban centres of the medieval period. These ensembles were the vibrant heart of the medieval cities and important urban landmarks. Until around the beginning of 20th century, bazaars were considered as the only production and exchange centre of the city. The decline of many of these ensembles was caused mainly by the emerging of individual commercial units in the city's inhabited neighbourhoods.

In the same manner also the old bazaar of Kruja, as the main craftsmanship and trade centre, was the main driving force towards the development of the open city as a transit from the fortified city. The urban development of the medieval bazaar was not subject to planning. The growth of the bazaar was gradual by adding new shops and buildings using local mastership and traditional knowledge.

Many medieval cities were built on hilly or uneven terrain, often due to the strategic advantages of such locations, such as higher elevations for defence purposes. The sloppy terrains over which many albanian cities rise during middle ages include a wide range of sloppy scapes such as hilly scapes etc. In the case of Kruja, the open city developed gradually around the castle and the old bazaar. The interconnections between historic buildings and the slope of the terrain in the city in many cases can be very complex. This type of settlement offers a range of dynamic views. The buildings have constraints in orientation, however they stand out for their compactness and the effective use of the terrain.



Figure 5-7 - The position of the old Bazaar in respect to the castle (2015), source: author

The old bazaar of Kruja remains is the oldest among remaining ensembles of this type in Albania. It is the linking element between the castle and the today's city centre. It has a complex history of its own, facing considerable destruction from several fires and also several reconstructions and restorations of which a major restoration in 1968 and the most recent restoration works in 2015. As shown in archival images after WWII, the bazaar extended along the street going towards the castle including many shops and ateliers. The alignment of the bazaar was adapted to the landscape and surrounded by houses embedded in extensive green areas, see Figure 5-10.

Today this ensemble is still a vibrant space that gathers numerous visitors and tourists from Albania and all over the world. It is a source of employment for the locals and a place that can play an important role for the revival of the traditional crafts and arts. A small part of the medieval ensemble is conserved (protected as a cultural monument), while the new shops that have been added to the ensemble have been unified in terms of volume and construction material to the historic ones. The surrounding environment has drastically changed due to many high rise constructions and massive buildings that defy the topography and in a very short period (have contributed to the transformation of the historic urban landscape that was created gradually for many years).

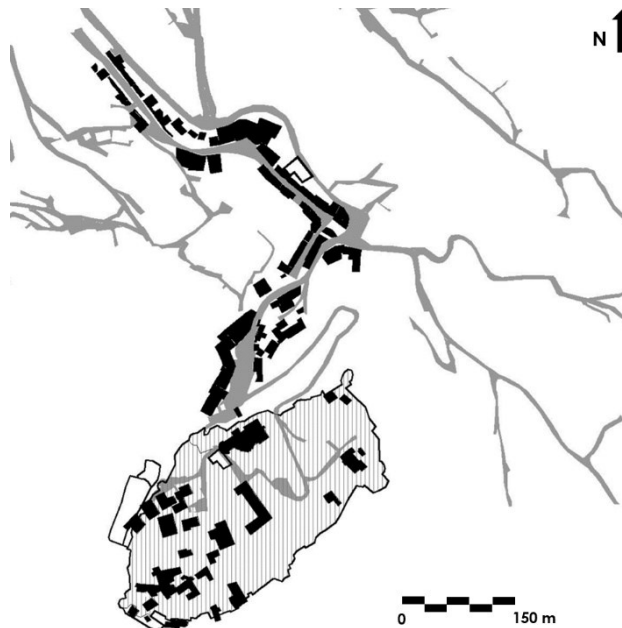


Figure 5-8 - The old Bazaar as the main element towards the development of the open city towards the north.

Based on its significance, it was one of the first four urban ensembles designated from the State as “Museum City” in 1961 (together with Berat, Gjirokastra and the Underground of Durrës”. The urban context of the old bazaar of Kruja, is analyzed in the subsequent parts of this article.

Analysis of the urban context of the Bazar

The territorial analysis included timeline comparison of urban context based on view points, orthophotos and plans in three distinct periods being (1) 1940s up to 1994, (2) 2007 and (3) 2015-2022.

During the first period the character of the landscape is created through a balance between human action (building) and nature (sloppy territory and green space) While some changes in the use of the landscape started to emerge during the second period (2007) still the overall situation of building seem to be under control. During the third period (2015-2022) many fast changes are visible in the territory, like the construction of high-rise buildings near the historic site of the bazaar. The high buildings obstruct views of the historic site, diminishing its visual impact and potentially reducing its attractiveness to visitors. In a long term this phenomenon (if not controlled) may have negative consequences for tourism, which is an important source of revenue for this area.

The high-rise buildings also have a physical impact on the historic site. They cast shadows that have altered the natural lighting conditions of low rise and vernacular buildings, which can contribute to the potential deterioration of these structures. Additionally, high buildings

can generate wind patterns that may accelerate erosion or other damage to historic buildings.

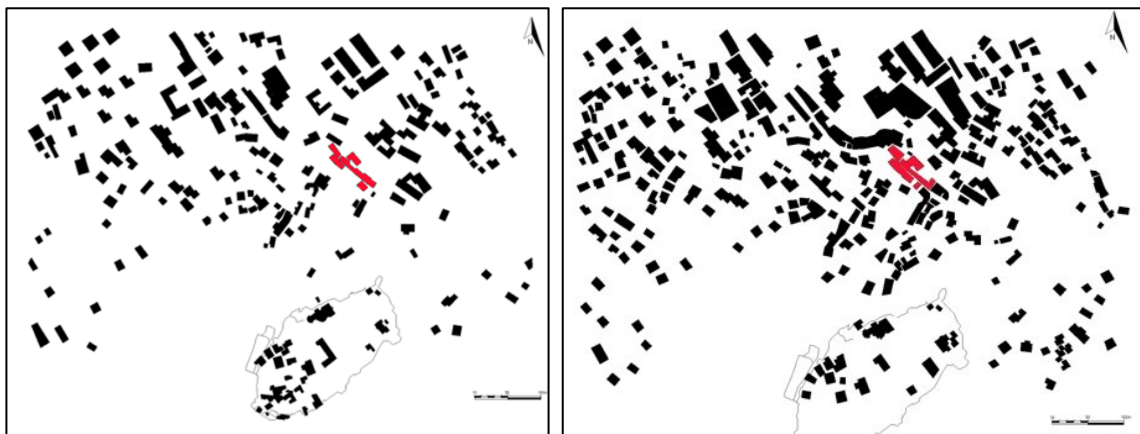


Figure 5-9– (left) urban layout around the old bazaar (in red) in 1994, (right) urban layout around the old bazaar (in red) in 2015

Figure 5-9 - shows the change in the density of buildings in the surroundings of the old bazaar in 2015 compared to the situation during 1994. An urban densification happened during the last 25 years in this city. These new and contrasting architectural creations in the immediate area close to the historic ensemble of the bazaar and castle raise the question of the integrity of the urban landscape. Priority should be imposed on urban development projects which did not harmonise with the existing historic urban fabric, thereby threatening the site.



Figure 5-10 (left) view of the bazaar after WWII highlighting the bazaar mosque as common element in both pictures, source: Technical Archive of the National Institute for Cultural Heritage, (right) view of the Bazaar in 2007, source: author

Territorial planning and conservation policies

After the 1990-s the city (like many cities in Albania) was faced with fast demographic and economic changes that eventually are translated also in spatial and territorial terms. Based on the demographic analysis of the general local plans (1998 and 2015) the following analysis can be drawn:

During 1985-1989 (during communist regime) the city has experienced a growth of the population. This can be considered as a false growth since many residents of neighbouring urban centers were employed (often without their consent) in Kruja. According to the policies

of the communist regime this phenomenon was considered either compulsory (punishment) or temporary employment. Also the social policies of the time and incentives for the natural growth favoured the general population growth.

In 1990, together with political changes, freedom of movement was introduced. The population of the city decreased relatively as the abovementioned category of people left Kruja returning to their original cities. During 1991-1992, there is a positive growth of the population of Kruja as a result of the arrival of new immigrants mainly from the more remote northern urban and rural areas in the country. During 1993-1994 the population growth continued, but already decreased in absolute value, as other urban areas such as Tirana and Durrës were more attractive to people.

During 1995-1998, for the first time, the number of people entering was smaller than those leaving Kruja. This means that the population of Kruja is currently decreasing. However, this is balanced by natural population growth. In the following 20 years being during 2000 – 2020, the city has experienced a small still gradual growth of population (Sallaku, 2020).

The territorial planning in Kruja has had two main phases respectively in 1998 and in 2017 as described below:

In 1998, the local authorities of the city of Kruja drafted a General Regulatory Plan for the city, where a detailed functional layout of the city's development was proposed. However it lacked update regarding demographic data and its prediction stops at 2020.

During 2016 - 2017, the general local plan of the municipality of Kruja was drafted and approved from the National Council of Territory. The territorial strategy accompanied by the summary of the analysis and evaluation of the territory aims to be a strategic guiding document for the development of the municipality as a whole, as well as to ensure sustainable development of the municipality in terms of economic, urban, environmental and any other important elements for the future 15 years. Sporadic reference is made on the provisions of administration for cultural heritage sites. In both general local plans, the old bazaar is considered as important cultural asset and low rise developments are proposed in the areas surrounding the bazaar.

The conservation policies in the historic area of the bazaar and castle have aimed at preservation of the authenticity and integrity of the ensemble. Based on the legislation on cultural heritage, only conservation and restoration are allowed interventions in cultural heritage assets. However no requirements are imposed to the immediate urban area surrounding the bazaar. **No buffer zone** has been established by the relevant authorities for the protection of cultural heritage. New development proposals in the bazaar or in its immediate setting get examined case by case and specific guidance on how to build close to

the historic area lacks. While a requirement is posed to the new development proposals for being approved from both the local government and also from the relevant councils for cultural heritage, many of the new building proposals do not go through this dual approval process and also informality is present.



Figure 5-11 – (left) view of the bazaar after 1941, source: Technical Archive of the National Institute for Cultural Heritage, (right) view of the Bazaar 2022, source: author

Results

The new and contrasting architectural creations in the immediate setting of the historic ensemble of the bazaar and castle, raise the question of the integrity of the urban landscape. Priority should be imposed on urban development projects which did not harmonise with the existing historic urban fabric, thereby threatening the site. While both territorial planning and conservation policies and documents aim to the preservation of the historic ensemble of the bazaar, they seem to have failed to properly address the development pressures in the urban context. Today the recent developments have contributed to the total transformation of the historic landscape with incompatible architecture negatively impacting the historic site's visual and aesthetic appeal.

Relevance of the field study for this research

The field study was relevant to understand the impact of the lack of protection provisions in the immediate surrounding of a cultural heritage site. It confirmed that the presence of buffer zones normative is necessary for the management of change in the immediate surroundings of the heritage sites.

The field study highlighted that strong collaboration between territorial planning and cultural heritage authorities and local government is crucial for the effectiveness of policies at local level. Such decisions for new developments close to the heritage sites should be made through a careful and thorough planning process that takes into consideration a wide range

of factors, including economic, social, environmental, and cultural considerations. It's also important to involve all relevant stakeholders, including local residents, businesses, and experts, in the planning process to ensure that their voices are heard and their concerns are addressed.

5.1.3 Tirana, Albania

While theorists such as Giovannoni argue that the nineteenth century represents the peak of vulgarity, lack of preparation, and the dominance of academic architecture, in Albania the post-1990 transition period (which continues to this day) constitutes the true culmination of these issues. The phenomenon of urban sprawl, and the unprecedented wave of construction that followed, found architects, urban planners, and municipal administrations wholly unprepared. Tirana is the most evident case: a city that transformed into a metropolis at a vertiginous pace within roughly thirty years. As this process continues, what is suffering, and in many cases disappearing, are the historic layers of the city, which are frequently sacrificed or negated in the face of contemporary development pressures. New constructions above, within, or adjacent to the historic centre often display indifference toward the urban elements and architectural features that once conferred a unique character upon the city.

Tirana, is characterized by continuous urban transformation, especially since the city was proclaimed the capital in 1920. Its morphology reflects multiple urban layers, pre-modern, interwar, socialist, and post-socialist, which frequently intersect, juxtapose, or, at times, erase one another due to shifting political agendas or urgent spatial demands.



In the countless instances of alteration that occur in less illustrious settings, particularly in the peripheral zones of the historic centre, continuous violations of regulations progressively undermine these areas. Piece by piece, and often in silence, such actions change the face of historic centres.

The possibilities for intervening in defence of the environment have been greatly diminished. It is no longer possible to rely on a general habit of respecting historic settings, even if this respect was once volatile, abstract, or rhetorical. Consequently, the demands put forward by specialists involved in monument conservation are regarded by non-experts, if not explicitly, then implicitly, as particular interests opposed to others, such as those of speculators,

property owners, and developers. These specialists can sustain such an unequal confrontation only because, unfortunately, the law still grants them its support.

Tirana is viewed as a complex example of a city in transition, characterized by a mixture of structures and historical events. Its heritage is composed of various layers of urban growth, including the old urban fabric, the monumental scale introduced during the Italian occupation (1920-1938), and the quasi-balanced morphology achieved by the end of the socialist period.

Values and Attributes

The Historic Centre of Tirana expands along the main boulevard built during the period of Italian influence (1920-1938) often served to impose a grandeur, visibility, and Western culture onto the city. Buildings like the Complexes of the Ministries and the National Bank were designed during this period along the boulevard and main Skanderbeg square. Buildings like the Clock Tower and the Mosque of Ethem Bey as well as medieval vernacular fabric of houses as well as early-20th century villas symbolize the historical visual memory of the present-day city.

The first Plan for Tirana dates in 1923 and is authored by Eshref Frashëri⁸⁷ and it had hygienic, sanitary aims. It was based on a detailed map provided from military Firenze and aimed aimed to unify and rationalize the Ottoman settlement. Only main routes were enlarged. Later plans (during Italian occupation) also introduced a large grid in the south area which were plots with villas. This fabric is visible today and new developments threaten to erase it.

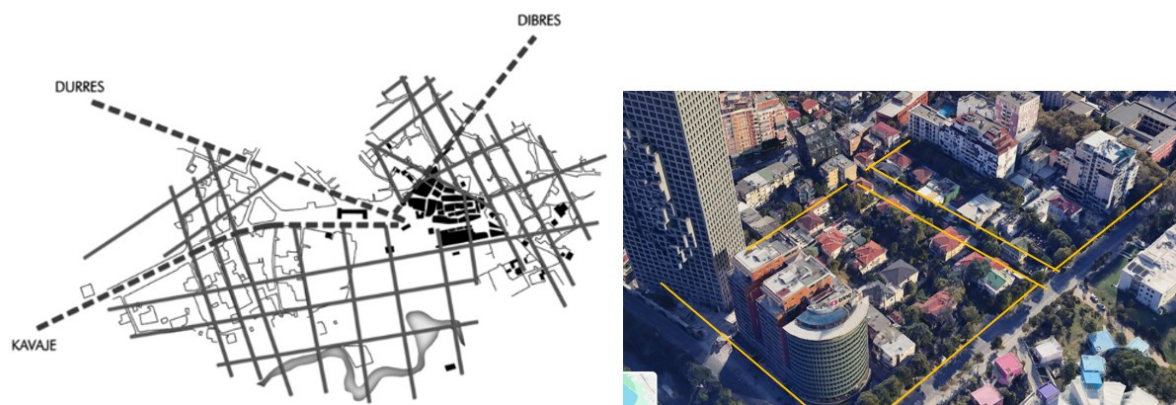


Figure 5-12 First Plan for Tirana, 1923, Eshref Frashëri and aerial photo showing remaining of the grid

Luarasi S. 2023 **identified two urban tendencies in the shaping of Tirana in the 1920s and 1930s: one tending to engage and assimilate the existing city, and the other to**

⁸⁷ published in Menghini / Pashako / Stigliano 2012

completely erase it. While the second trend has historically prevailed, and is still prevailing today, there have been several “match points” in history, when these two trends were in competition with each other.

Albanian legislation generally recognizes the necessity of preserving the "surroundings" of heritage buildings. However, due to the regulatory inflexibility that often prohibits new development within buffer areas, the protected area is frequently limited only to the historical building's yard or is not designated at all. This approach fails to manage change within the urban units carefully using a holistic, value-based approach. As it is observed by the changes of the historic centre through time (see figures below) it is evident that the development pressure is causing diminishing of the buffer are as well as of the historic centre itself.

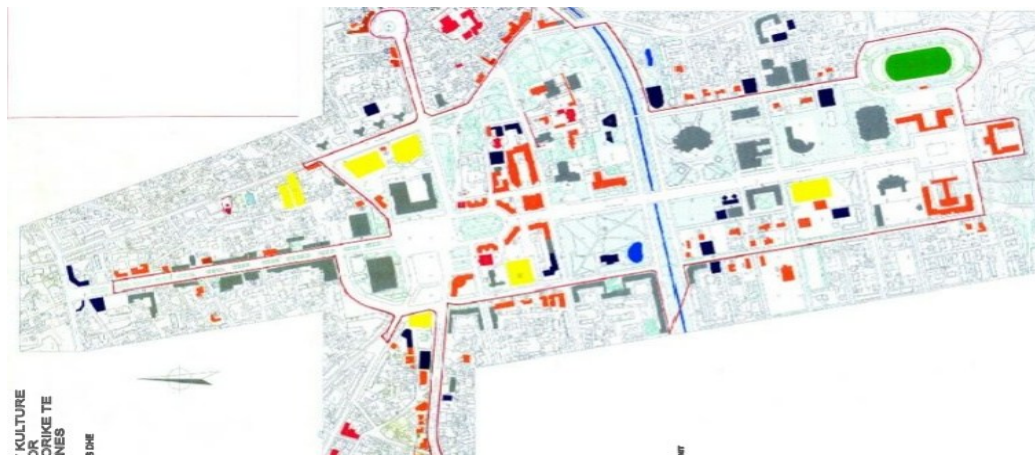


Figure 5-13 – Zoning Plan of Tirana 2007 – The delineation shows the border of Historic Centre – The colored buildings refer to the designated monuments. Different colors of the single buildings refer to different functions eg. administrative, residential etc



Figure 5-14 Zoning Plan of Tirana 2018 (yellow presence of historic fabric not included in the buffer zone and areas with red arrows show the pressure of the development and shrinking of the protected area boundary eg. red arrows show the shrinking of the boundary of historic centre (compared to the zoning plan 2007) leaving several areas in the buffer zone.

The following sections aim to tackle challenges present two different types of surroundings in Tirana. The Type 2- surrounding that resulted from a planned projection (early 1920s) that eventually became the current historic centre, as well as examples of Type 1 – surroundings such as the immediate surroundings of the individual heritage buildings and their relationship with their urban units.

Type 2 – Projected Extension “Planning at the edge”

In early 20th century, Albania was a newly developing country, striving to modernize, after centuries of Ottoman rule. This process unfolded within a fragile political context, culminating in the presidency of Ahmet Zog and his proclamation as king. Both, under the presidency of Ahmet Zog (1925) and during his proclaimed but short-lived monarchy (1928-1939), Albania developed strategic alliance and commercial relationships with the fascist Italy under Mussolini. During this period, as there was an urgent need to modernize institutions, infrastructure, and urban form, important architectural and urban interventions were commissioned in the newly established capital Tirana and key cities, such as Durrës. These aimed to modernize the country while translated into a significant Italian involvement in architectural and urban planning projects, particularly in Tirana and major coastal cities such as Durrës (Dhamo et al., 2019).

Avoiding radical *tabula rasa* interventions, first approaches of Italian-led planning in Albania engaged strategically with pre-existing urban structures. This approach resulted in a complex relationship between newly introduced authoritarian urban models and historic city fabrics.

Before the interwar interventions, Tirana was characterized by an urban structure shaped by Ottoman-type socio-spatial organization. (Frashëri, 2004), Aliaj et al. (2003) Dhamo et al. (2016) note that the city developed around a network of neighbourhoods structured by religious, commercial, and social functions, with the bazaar acting as the primary economic and civic nucleus. This morphology was largely informal, incremental, and horizontally scaled, reflecting centuries of gradual spontaneous growth rather than a planned urban setting.(see Figure 5-15) The establishment of Tirana as the capital in 1920, required the creation of new representative spaces capable of embodying state authority and national identity. Italian involvement became decisive in this regard. As Luarasi (2021) strongly emphasises *“Two urban approaches in the shaping of Tirana in the 1920s and 1930s: one tending to engage and assimilate the existing city, and the other to completely erase it. While the second trend has historically prevailed, and is still prevailing today, there have been several “match points” in history, when these two trends were in competition with each other.”*

Menghini et al. (2012) and Dhamo et al. (2016) highlight the plan of Armando Brasini (1925)

as one of the earliest and most influential proposals, which introduced a monumental composition centred on what would become Skanderbeg Square and a new ministerial complex. Significantly, this intervention was positioned at the edge of the existing Ottoman city, adjacent to but not overlapping the historic bazaar area. This spatial choice reveals a deliberate planning strategy. By situating the new civic core outside the historic city, the intervention avoided direct destruction while establishing a clear symbolic and functional alternative. The contrast between the organic Ottoman fabric and the rigid neoclassical order of the new square articulated a shift in power, governance, and cultural orientation. The new space embodied state centralization, hierarchy, and monumentality, qualities aligned with Fascist architectural ideology. This approach resonates with broader Fascist planning practices, where new urban forms were frequently introduced adjacent to historic centres, allowing the regime to assert ideological dominance while preserving the historic city as a backdrop rather than a functional core. In Tirana, the edge thus became a site of negotiation between continuity and rupture.

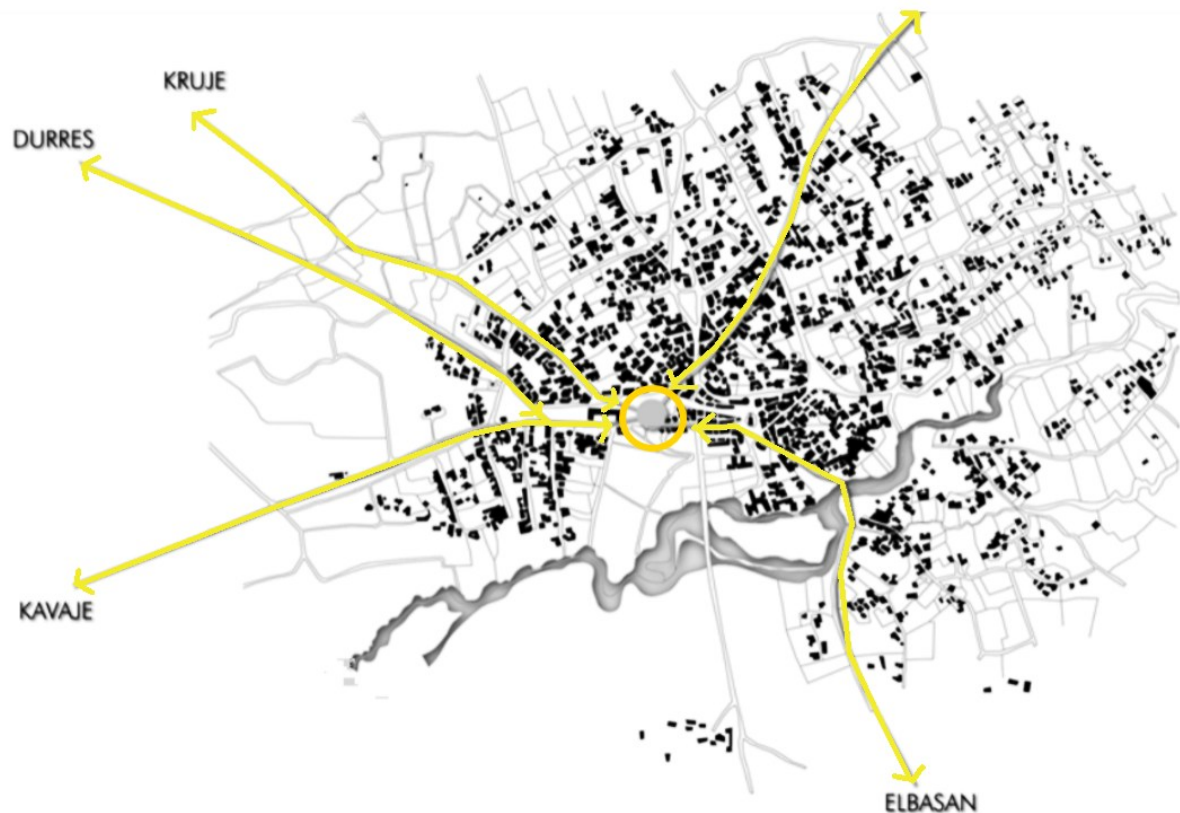


Figure 5-15 - Tirana city plan map 1917. Highlighted in a yellow circle the converging centre of the main roads at the edge of the existing city but what shall become the new proposed main administrative square in 1937. *Basemap source: Technical Archive – in (Aliaj et al., 2003), (Menghini et al., 2012), (Dhamo et al., 2016).*

The edge becoming a centre – Tirana's Monumental Axis

The initial insertion of a new civic space at the edge of Tirana's historic fabric was

consolidated through subsequent urban planning and architectural development. The most significant of these was the creation of a monumental boulevard starting from piazza Skanderbeg towards the south, designed initially by Florestano Di Fausto (1929). This boulevard linked Skanderbeg Square with a sequence of administrative and institutional buildings, forming a coherent urban axis. This axis was later refined and expanded towards the north by Gherardo Bosio (1939-42), (Dhamo et al., 2016);(Menghini et al., 2012).

The axis functioned as a powerful spatial instrument. As discussed by Dhamo et al. (2016), the central plaza was a key instrument for expressing monocentric domination and state authority. The boulevard reorganized movement, visibility, and hierarchy within the city, gradually redirecting civic life toward the new monumental core. While the Ottoman bazaar continued to exist, its role as the primary civic centre diminished over time.



Figure 5-16 - Tirana city plan 1937, this base map shows a critical moment when the initial approach of intervening while preserving the preexisting was changing to a more abrupt intervention like the extension of the main boulevard to the north through the existing urban tissue. Source of the base map: (Luarasi, 2022) the new proposed centre and the main monumental axis that extends both in south and north is depicted in yellow by the author of this study.

Rationalist and neoclassical forms established a unified visual language that contrasted with the heterogeneous historic fabric, further consolidating the new centre's symbolic dominance. This process exemplifies how planning at the edge can evolve into a redefinition of the urban core through gradual spatial and functional shifts that preceded the abrupt interventions of the Bosios' plan.

Following the Second World War, socialist planning in Albania did not dismantle this spatial framework. Instead, it appropriated and reinterpreted it. The 1950 plan for Tirana, developed by Gani Strazimiri at the Moscow Architectural Institute, reaffirmed the centrality of the monumental axis and proposed its further development within a socialist ideological framework (Mëhilli, 2017). This continuity demonstrates the structural resilience of the Fascist-era urban model and highlights how different authoritarian regimes reused inherited spatial systems to serve new ideological narratives.

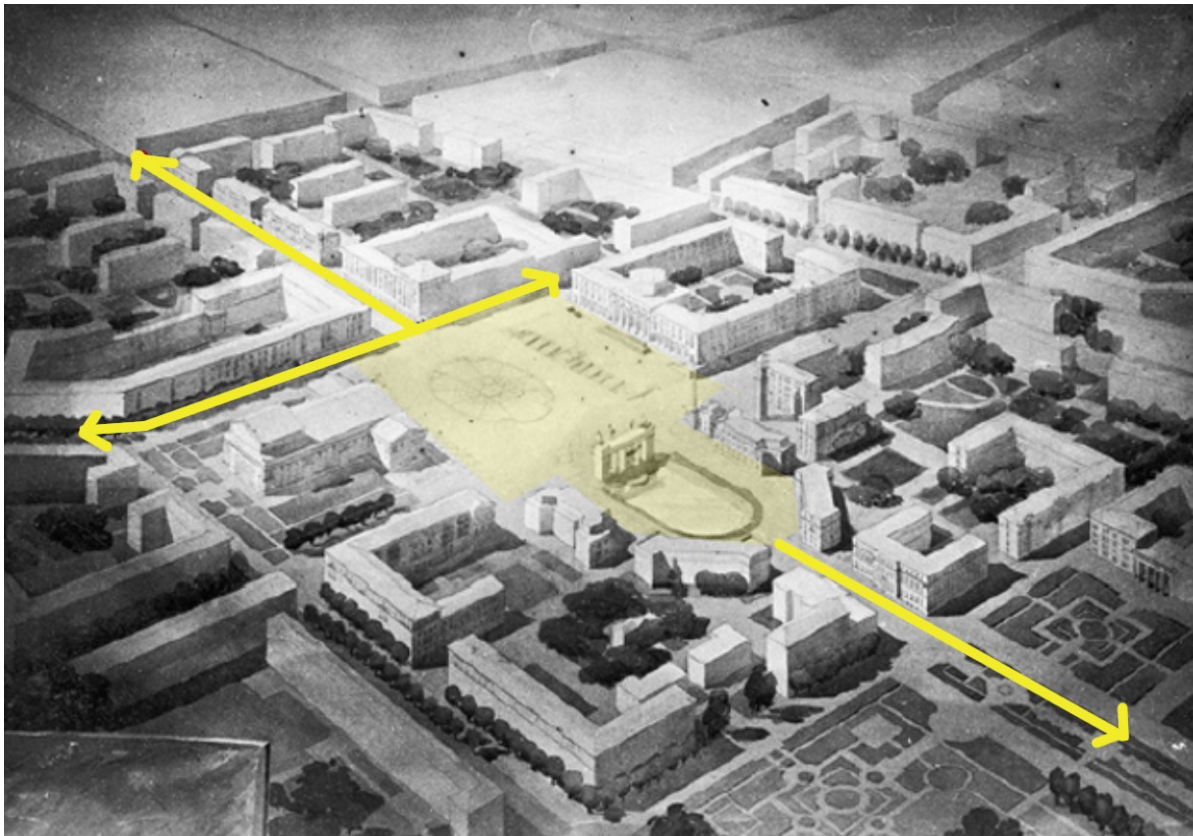


Figure 5-17 - Plan for Tirana 1950 A socialist capital: Gani Strazimiri's study for Tirana, conceived at the Architectural Institute in Moscow, December 1950. AQSH. – source: (Mëhilli, 2017), the schematic depiction in yellow of the permanence of the monumental axis and main administrative square are made from the author of this study

Type 1 – Gradual Accretion - Relationship between historical buildings and their urban units in Tirana

In his 1985 essay “Imagining Nothingness,” Rem Koolhaas introduces ‘the archipelago city’ as a significant urban concept. He describes a condition in which “the desire for stability and the need for instability are no longer incompatible,” producing a city that becomes “an archipelago of architectural islands floating in a post-architectural landscape of erasure, where what was once a city is now a highly charged nothingness” (Koolhaas 1985, 201). This concept emerged from Koolhaas’s earlier collaboration with Oswald Mathias Ungers in the

1970s and remained central in later projects, most notably the proposal “The City in the City: Berlin, A Green Archipelago” (Ungers and Koolhaas 1977). The idea of an archipelago city, composed of “cities within the city,” has since become a critical lens through which to examine the formal and formative role of architecture in shaping metropolitan space.

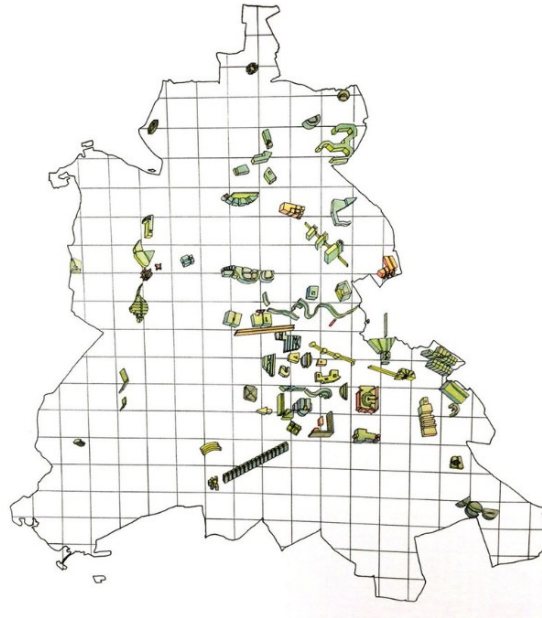


Figure 5-18 Peter Riemann with Oswald Mathias Ungers, "The City in the City" (1977) from "Pictures at an Exhibition" The City in the City: Berlin: A Green Archipelago⁸⁸

This theoretical background connects directly with the main hypothesis underpinning the section above on the planning projection in Tirana: that early 20th-century interventions introducing new buildings into organic urban plots were, to some degree, sensitive to existing contexts. These additions often sought to communicate formally with surrounding structures, acknowledging the continuity of the urban unit. In contrast, contemporary interventions frequently demonstrate the opposite tendency. Buildings now designated as historic are often treated as isolated monuments, administratively and visually detached from their urban units, while new constructions introduced into these units display indifference toward the historic environment. Through zoning practices and heritage designation boundaries, historic buildings are defined as permanent elements, yet the rest of the urban unit develops unevenly and dynamically.

Drawing on Luarasi's (2021) conceptualization of uneven urban development, historic buildings can be understood as islands within emerging archipelagos, their connections to the surrounding urban fabric increasingly strained. Although they remain formally recognized as significant nodes, their communicative relationship with newer structures often weakens

⁸⁸ Source: <<http://plmosley.tumblr.com/post/115798107429/peter-riemann-with-oswaldmathias-ungers-the>>

over time. While introducing the concept of separate *islands* and *archipelagos* referring to new gated communities and high-rise interventions to today's urban units of Tirana, (Luarasi, 2021) further compares the existing urban layout to a 'sea' between the islands which consists of an *"unbridled urban growth, both as extension beyond the city, and as an erasure of the existing historical fabric from within."*

This condition raises a central question that links directly with the objectives of this research in understanding the surroundings of heritage sites:

What impact do transformations of the urban context impose on historic buildings, and how do historic buildings, in turn, influence the character and evolution of the urban units they inhabit?

Addressing this question requires, first, a clear understanding of the role that heritage buildings play in contemporary urban units. Accordingly, an important component of this research is the task of defining what constitutes an urban unit and exploring the methods by which it can be interpreted. Understanding urban units, together with their transformations over time, as well as the role that heritage buildings play in their urban units forms the basis of a didactic and analytical exercise applied in the framework of this research by the author of this research. This question was at the core of a morphological field study on the impact of the urban transformation of the urban units of 10 (ten) selected heritage buildings in Tirana, in a time frame of about 60 years.

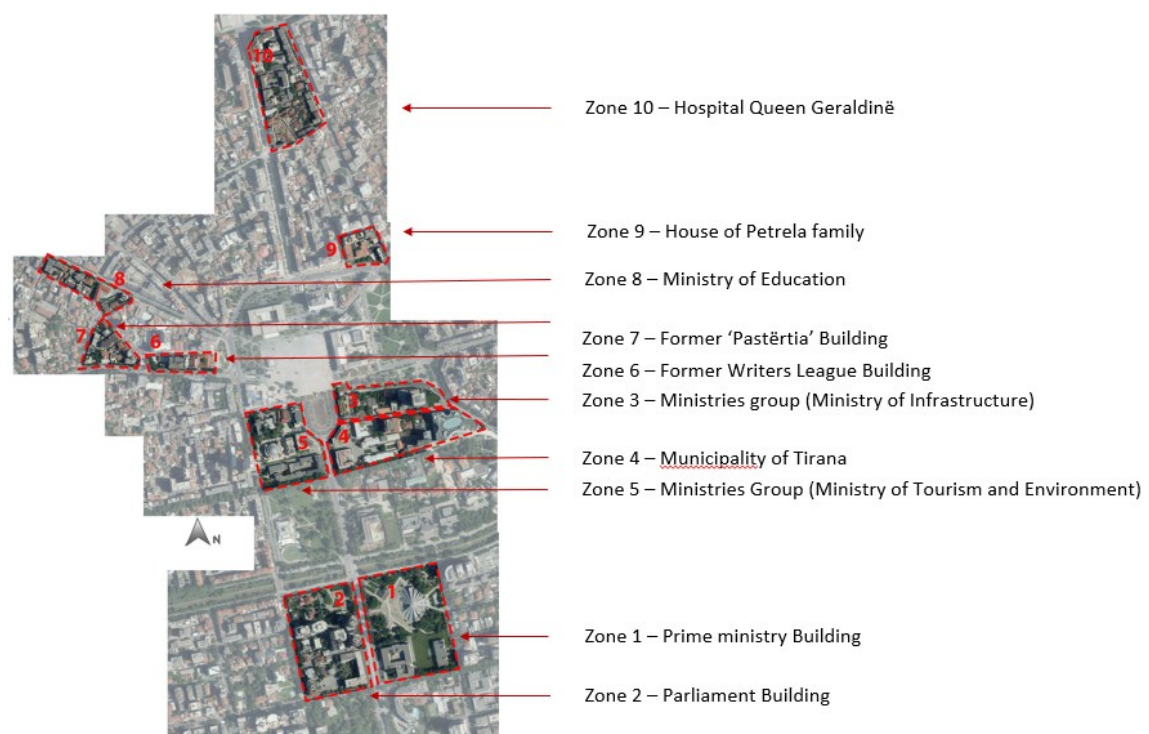


Figure 5-19 - Location of selected historical building within their urban units in Tirana urban layout, Source:(Demaj et al., 2026)

The field study was introduced and tested by the Demaj et al. (2026), author of this research, in the framework of a workshop with 2nd year architecture students at Polis University (2023). It aimed to test the methods of analysis of the urban units and understand the modes of intervention through time in the immediate surroundings of heritage buildings.⁸⁹

The objectives of this research and the research sub-question *How do the surroundings / buffer zones function in practice?*, are the departure point for undertaking this field study and also for the selection of the case studies. This field study also aimed to test the methodology of analysing the transformation through using the conceptual tools of *Continuity* and *Interruption*. The analysis focused in the Urban scale

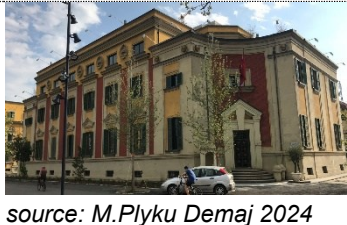
The case studies consisted in Ten historical buildings of the 20-s and 30-s. The selection criteria had to do with the fact that at the moment that they were constructed, they were either the first building in an empty plot (no.1, no.2, no.10), or they were inserted into an existing built context aiming to both reconfigure and fit with Tirana's so-called "organic" urban fabric. It was in these first years of the 20th century, and after the proclamation of Tirana as capital, that significant urban interventions were introduced in the existing historical habitat.

Considering that the main stock of the protected historical buildings today in Tirana consists of early 20th century-built heritage, the focus of the research was this period. The selected historical buildings are part of the National List of Cultural Monuments since based on their architectural and historical values, they were designated as 2nd Category Monuments⁹⁰ at 2007, see Table Table 5-3. From a methodological point of view, the studio exercise proceeded with a two-step approach – (1) analysis and (2) comparison. The exercise encourages the students to look beyond their individual “plot” / “building”. The method used for defining the urban unit, was inspired from the didactic approach of Angelil and Hebel (2008, p.233), in which the site-plan is developed as a series of investigative actions. The analysis of urban units was carried out through the *tracing* and *layering* of the selected urban units in terms of their historical transformation. Conceptual tools of Continuity and Interruption were used. Then this tracing and layering was evaluated in terms of the changes - *continuities* or *interruptions* - of the historical relations between heritage buildings and their immediate urban contexts. (Demaj et al., 2026)

⁸⁹ This work is published in the framework of this research in Demaj, M. P., Luarasi, S., & Nika, B. (2026). The Relationship Between Heritage Buildings and Their Urban Unit—Reinterpreting the Role of the Urban Context in Historical Habitats Facing Rapid Transformations, Case of Tirana. In *Self-Sufficient Cities and Sustainable Habitats: Perspectives and Case Studies* (pp. 113-124). Springer.

⁹⁰ Based on the Albanian legislation for cultural heritage, the 2nd Category Monuments are generally protected as complementary to the already protected urban ensembles or urban units as well as for (but not limited to) the values presented in their exterior, volumes, composition of the plans, facades, decorations etc.

Table 5-3 The selected historical buildings for the field study, Source:(Demaj et al., 2026)

	No.1: Prime Ministry building Construction date: 1939-1941 Author: Gherardo Bosio Designation: II-nd Category Designation date: 2007		No.2: Parliament building. Construction dates: 1940s, 1950s. Author Phase I: Giuseppe Paladini Author Phase II: Anton Lufi Designation: II-nd Category Designation date: 2007
	No.3: Ministry of Infrastructure Construction date: 1939-1941 Author: Armando Brasini Designation: II-nd Category Designation date: 2007		No.4: Municipality building Construction Date: 1929 Author: Florestano di Fausto Designation: II-nd Category Designation date: 2007
	No.6: Former Writers League Construction date: 1930s Designation: II-nd Category Designation date: 2007		No.5: Ministry of Tourism and Environment Construction date: 1929 Author: Florestano di Fausto Designation: II-nd Category Designation date: 2007
	No.7: Former "Pastërtia" Construction date: 1930s Designation: II-nd Category Designation date: 2007		No.8: Ministry of Education Construction date: 1930s Designation: II-nd Category Designation date: 2007
	No.9: Petrela House Construction Date: 1920s Designation: II-nd Category Designation date: 2007		No.10: Queen Geraldine Hospital Construction Date: 1939-1940 Author: Titto Chioni Designation: II-nd Category Designation date: 2007

(Vokshi 2013, p.202-205)

Based on the 10 historical buildings selected as case studies four distinct layers as below were proposed to be developed:

Layer 1 – draw the basic structure of the site and buildings using coloured lines.

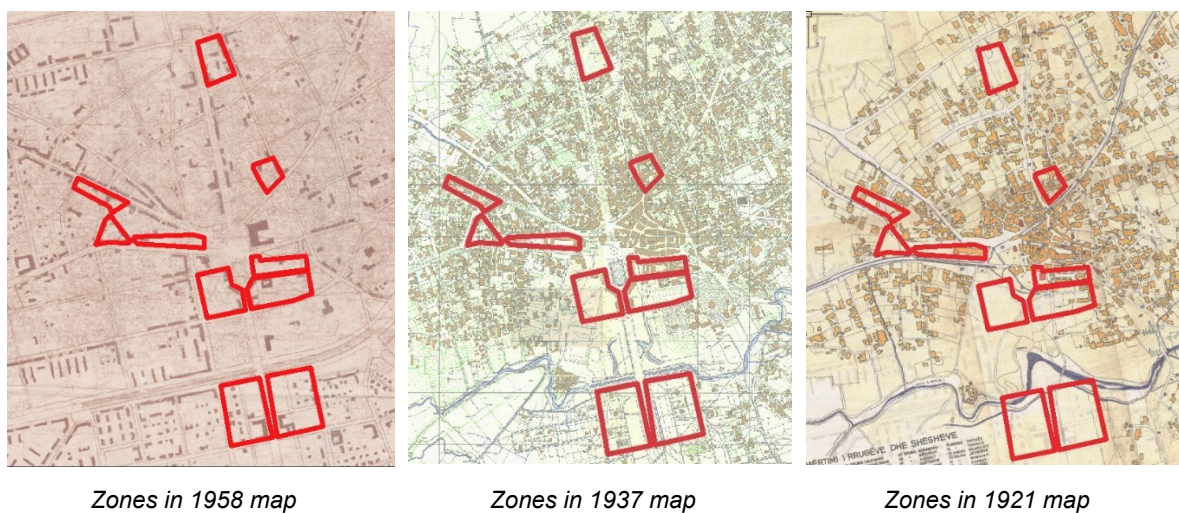
Layer 2 – indicate the most important space-defining architectural elements in your system and record them with overlays in black.

Layer 3 – indicate the main functions, as well as secondary functions in your spatial system with coloured fields (served and serving spaces).

Layer 4 – consider the impact of light and shadow in your sequence of spaces, programs, and uses.

Historic Maps of Tirana namely those of 1921, 1937, 1958, 2020, were used for the layer analysis (see Table 5-4- Identification of case study zones in three historical periods). By using the tracing and layering method, the students identified the historical building(s) in each of the historical maps and speculated on the shape and configuration of their appertaining urban units.

Table 5-4- Identification of case study zones in three historical periods, source: (Demaj et al., 2026)



The urban units were analysed in terms of permeability and opacity, served and serving spaces, planimetric and altimetric organization, solid and void, as well as in terms of their visual relationship with the city, namely, how these urban units are perceived from the city, and the latter is perceived from within the units. Then the selected historical building and their connection with the urban units undergoes the same modes of analysis.

The historical maps serve to understand the urban unit as a layered object or palimpsest and its intrinsic relationships in history, while site visits and cognitive mappings of the selected zones serve to project contemporary mental maps onto the palimpsest, thus subjectively positioning oneself in relation to the urban unit. This method of *Serial Visioning*, used also by MUD-Lab (2020), is a visual approach to urban design first introduced by Gordon Cullen in his 1961 classic *Townscape*. For Cullen (1961), urban design is the "art of relationships" between the various physical elements of the urban landscape. It is the art of taking "all the elements that go to create the built environment: buildings, trees, nature, water, traffic, advertisements, and so on and to weave them in such a way that drama is released." It is a presentation from the moving person's perspectives rather than from the bird's eye

view. This method of visual representation through photographs and sketches was proposed as a tool for evaluating contemporary experience of moving around a space and understanding it. In the context of hands-on workshop, the students also attempted to create a bridge between history and design by modelling the layered readings of the analysis of the urban unit in two or more historical periods. (Demaj et al., 2026)

Results

The result of the studio work confirmed the initial hypothesis of this research that in most cases, the uneven and insensitive new modes of intervention have contributed to the transformation or disfiguration of the urban units. The tendencies of erasure resulted more evident in the case of Tirana.

Even though the selected historical buildings are conserved as permanent features within the urban units, their immediate surroundings have undergone deep transformations. The latter are visible in all the layers extracted during analysis. While starting from a denser network of lines depicting either streets or building lines (Figure 5-20), the current situation results in less traces and layers, which evinces erasure of the former fabric and more impenetrable large buildings.

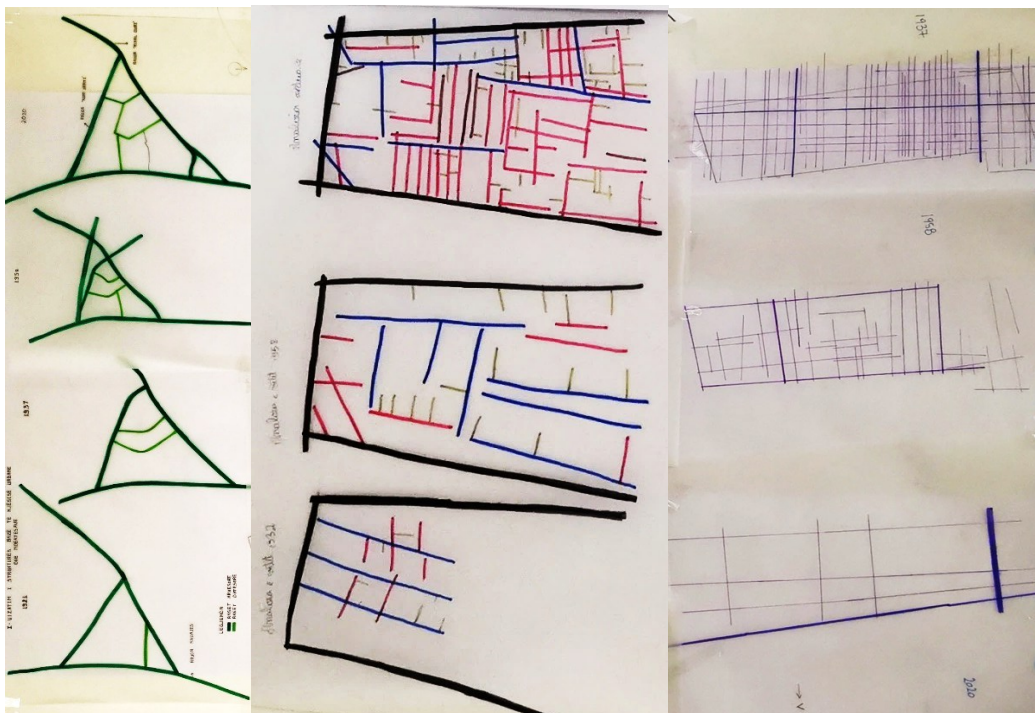


Figure 5-20 - Examples from the Layer Analysis undertaken in Task 1 – Layer 1, source:(Demaj et al., 2026)

Analysis of the layers depicting especially in common and private spaces showed a shift in

building scale and a diminishing of common space in favour of private properties (Figure 5-20). Shadow analysis displays the drastic changes and shifts in the relationships among the buildings comprising the urban unit (Figure 5-21). In many cases the new buildings appear as separate elements within what used to be a distinct urban unit, ignoring the relationship with their surroundings and adjacent structures. Such disfiguration of the urban unit has a negative impact on the historical buildings (even if they are not destroyed), insofar as it destroys the urban space in and from which we can experience these historical buildings



Figure 5-21 - Examples from the Layer Analysis undertaken in Task 1 – Layer 2-3-4,
Source: (Plyku Demaj & Buka, 2024)

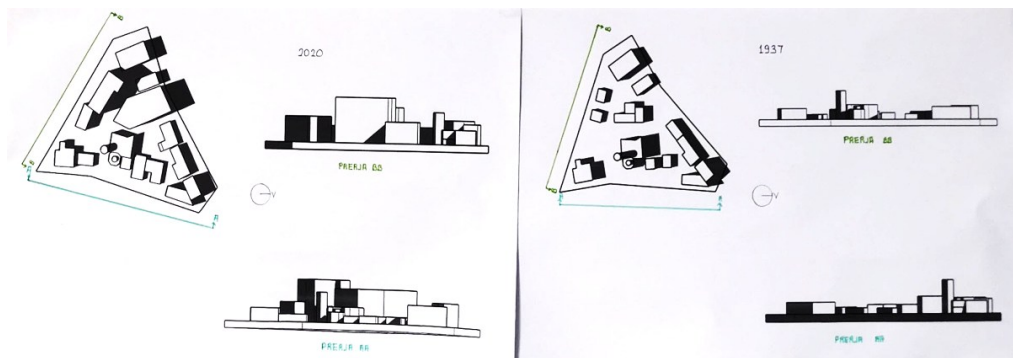


Figure 5-22- Examples from the Layer Analysis undertaken during Task 1- Layer 4,
Source:(Demaj et al., 2026)

The second task focused on the comparative analysis of the urban unit. Based on the selection of two historical periods that best represent the changes in the relationship between historical buildings and their urban unit, students modelled the results derived from the layer

analysis performed in Task 1 (see figures 5-9).



Figure 5-23 (right) – Final model Zone 6, (left) Final model, Zone 5, source:(Demaj et al., 2026)

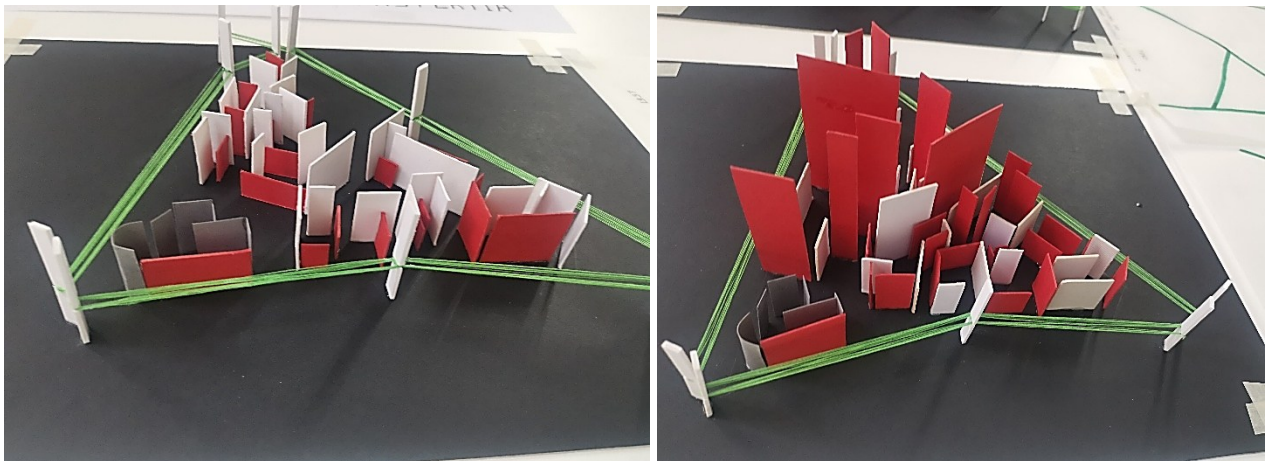


Figure 5-24 - Final model Zone 7, source: (Demaj et al., 2026)



Figure 5-25- Final model Zone 4, source:(Demaj et al., 2026)

Relevance of the Field study for this research

This Field Work and didactic exercise directly contributed to the understanding of interrelationships between heritage buildings and their surroundings whether or not these

surroundings are formally designated as buffer zones. In the case of Tirana the fact that the formal buffer zones were confined to only the yard of each building contributes to the understanding of the impact of the development pressure to the normatives on the immediate surroundings and vice versa. The **two tendencies of erasure and integration** introduced in the framework of this research were understood through the methodology of layer analysis through time using the tools of continuity and interruption.

Finally it helped to shape the hypothesis that surroundings / buffer zones can be a tool for informing project design.

5.1.4 Durrës, Albania

Durrës, the main portual city of Albania, has been continuously inhabited for more than 27 centuries. With a history dating back to antiquity, Durrës contains multiple urban layers, including Roman, Byzantine, Venetian, and Ottoman periods. Archaeological studies have emphasized the stratified nature of the city and the sensitivity required in urban intervention (Hidri & Hidri, 2014). As noted by Baçe (1988), the area with the greatest concentration of significant monuments lies in the flat zone enclosed by the 5th–6th century fortifications, particularly within the approximately 50 hectares of the main enclosure, very close to the port area. This same area later became the core of the late medieval city, which was re-established from the end of the 17th century and remained the main focus of urban life until recent years.

Durrës is an Adriatic seacoast city destined to be a gateway between east and west. With a rich and uninterrupted urban history spanning several millennia, Durrës has been the crossroad of numerous civilizations, from the Illyrians, Greeks and Romans to the Byzantines, Slavs, Normans, Venetians, Ottomans and Europeans, embodying and displaying a rich inventory of archaeological, cultural and architectural heritage. Starting from its first official designation in 1961 as a “Museum City” it is considered as one of the most significant protected historic, cultural and archaeological heritage sites in Albania. Its consistent strategic importance has continuously attracted urban development often negatively impacting layers of history and unfortunately erasing in many cases significant tangible archaeological and architectural testimonies coming from different historic periods. Thus, in the last 25 years, the historic urban landscape has been deeply modified and transformed due to the construction of high-rise buildings which have negatively impacted both archaeology, and historic core as well as the vistas from the hills of the city to the sea and vice-versa, and visual corridors in / from its fortification walls (Plyku Demaj & Buka, 2024).

Type 3 – Buffer as Vertical Palimpsest

This section discusses on the *conceptual type of the buffer* as a vertical palimpsest of the built environment. It aims to provide an understanding on the interrelationship between the unearthed and visible archaeological layers. It displays the results of two field study analysis undertaken as didactic exercises by the author of this research in Durrës and published in the framework of this research. One field work ((Plyku Demaj & Buka, 2024) focused in the urban scale, in understanding the relationship between the lower archaeological sometimes unearthed historic core layer and the upper under built layers that were successively added over the historic core and that conceptually may be referred to as a vertical surrounding or buffer layer. The other field study (Buka et al., 2023) focused in both urban and architectural scales and aimed to understand the transformations that the upper layers constituting in the medieval and early 20th century developments, had undergone through time. While directly testing methods of analysis based on values sustained in this research these field studies aimed to test the hypothesis that buffer zones (upper layer surroundings in the case of Durrës) are not static areas that do not relate with the historic core but rather an expansion of the historic core through time that bear historic values from the different phases of the city urban life.

In cities characterized by long and continuous occupation, multiple historical phases accumulate vertically, creating a stratified urban fabric in which archaeological layers coexist with later built structures. In such contexts, the archaeological underground is frequently considered the most significant historical value, as heritage assessments often prioritize the age criterion. Consequently, earlier and buried layers tend to receive greater attention and protection. This approach, however, may lead to the relative undervaluation of the more recent historical layers that remain visible above ground. At the same time, the organically developed urban fabric that forms the upper layers of the city can be understood as a protective buffer for the archaeological remains beneath it. These layers are not merely contemporary additions but represent successive historical phases that have contributed to the city's evolution. Within this vertical palimpsest, the different layers exist in a delicate symbiotic relationship, provided that all of them are recognized as integral components of the city's historical stratification. If one layer is privileged over the others, whether the archaeological underground or the later built fabric, the risk of damaging or erasing parts of the historical continuum becomes significant. In such situations, the imbalance in valuation may ultimately result in the loss of either earlier or later phases of urban development, fragmenting the historical narrative embedded in the city's layered structure.

As mentioned in Plyku Demaj and Buka (2024) the “Old part and the underground of Durrës” was one of the four first Albanian urban ensembles designated as “Museum City” in 1961

and that there was a specific regulation drawn for the protection of the Historic Centre since 1986. Triggered by this fact the questions raised by the field work study undertaken by Plyku Demaj and Buka (2024) are: “Can we talk today about a historic centre in Durrës”? If “Yes” - What constitutes now the historic centre of Durrës?

As shown from the analysis of urban sprawl in Figure 5-26 the historic centre is challenged from a high development pressure.

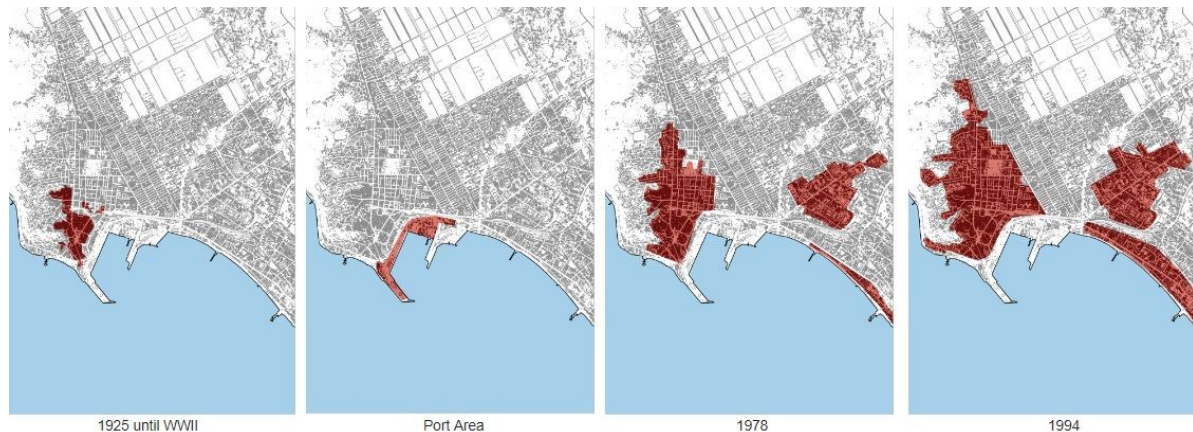


Figure 5-26 - Diagrams showing the urban sprawl during 1925 - 1994. Source: (Plyku Demaj & Buka, 2024)

Previous research such as Buka et al (2024) and Çapeli et al (2016) show the existence of several permanent features in the urban layout and architectural characteristics featuring early 20th century interventions. Çapeli et al (2016) notes that the buildings built along the “Commercial Street” create a nice corridor street atmosphere. Some of these are in a Neo-Classical or Eclectic style (built before 1926), but others reflect a modern architecture clearly influenced by the principles of Italian rationalism (built after 1926).



Figure 5-27 - Epidamn boulevard during 1926, 1980 and today⁹¹

⁹¹ Source: Buka , I., Plyku Demaj, M., & Kumaraku, L. (2024). Exploring the dialectic between permanence and change. The case of Epidamn Boulevard in Durrës. International Conference

Figure 5-28 and Figure 5-29 below show the negative impacts of continuous urban development on layers of history. Clearly the general vistas of the city reflect the introduction of high rise buildings in the city centre and in the seacoast forming a wall between the sea and the historic urban neighborhoods

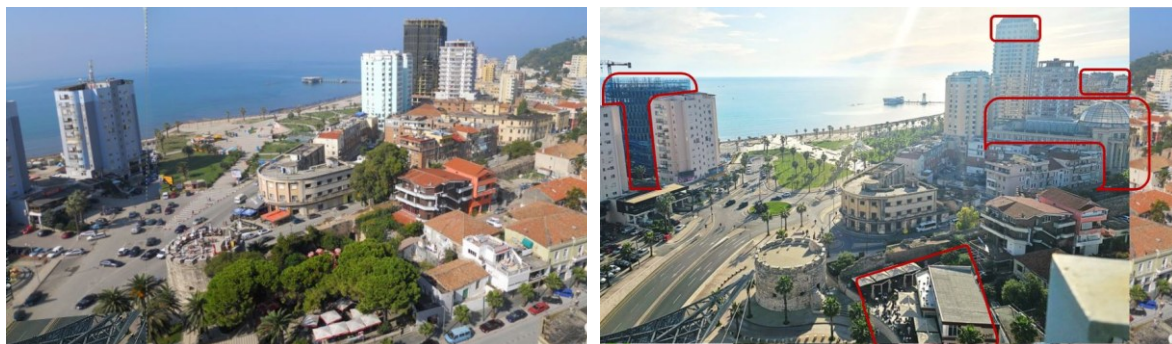


Figure 5-28 Vista of the city looking towards the venetian tower from one of the fortification towers highlighting in red the negative impacts of new high-rise buildings development (Angevin tower) photos dating back in 2010 (credits: Marsela Plyku Demaj) and in 2024 (credits: Iden Buka)

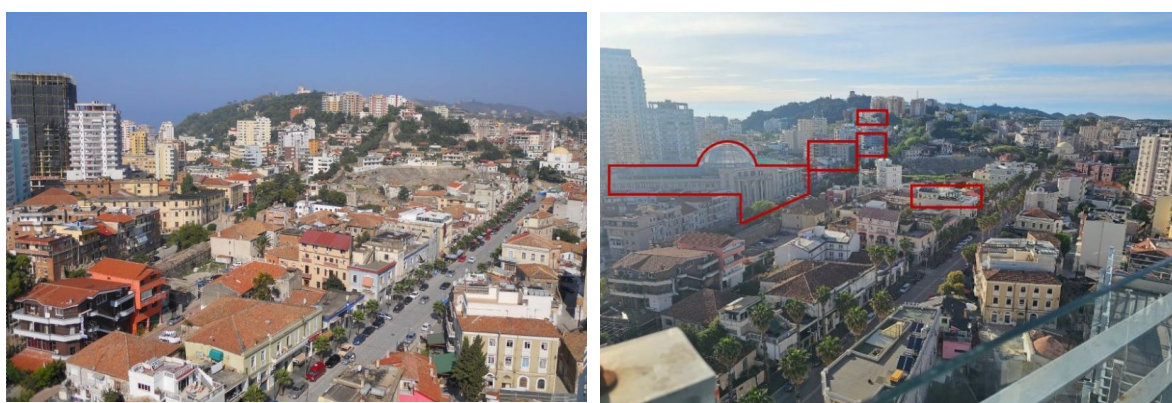


Figure 5-29 - Vista of the city looking towards the Epidamn boulevard from one of the fortification towers highlighting in red the negative impacts of new high-rise buildings development (Angevin tower) photos dating back in 2010 (source Marsela Plyku Demaj) and in 2024 (source Iden Buka)

The chronology of the official designations of the archaeological and historic urban area of Durrës is presented in Table 5-5 - Chronology of the designations of the historic and cultural values of the city below. It is clear that even though the protection of both the historic urban area and archaeological area were in focus of legal protections (see designations of 1961, 1989 up to 2005, in following 2011 and 2018 designations focus was given only to the archaeological zoning not mentioning the upper historic urban layer, which was limited only to occasional protection of buildings designating them as cultural monuments.

Table 5-5 - Chronology of the designations of the historic and cultural values of the city

Date and Legal document	Zoning / Authority / Allowed interventions
1961 ⁹²	Museum-City - «The Old Part and the Underground of Durrës» University of Tirana is in charge for developing the regulation within 1962 ⁹³ , noting that until the specific regulation is developed, the regulation to be followed is that of Berat and specific dispositions of Tirana Univesity
1989 ⁹⁴	Zone A – not dense 1-2 stories buildings. Higher buildings allowed in rare cases if no archaeological assets are priorly verified Zone B - Buffer zone - New constructions allowed after archaeological testing Zone C - in observation for possible findings in the underground / New construction allowed
2005 ⁹⁵	Same as the zoning of 1989
2011 ⁹⁶	The Ministry of Culture with its subordinate institutions is the main authority / The National Council for Tangible Cultural Heritage has a key role / The local government is responsible for building permissions in Zone B Zone A - Integrated maintenance, restoration and conservation / road reconstruction and all works in the engineering network reconstruction/rebuilding of existing buildings without changes to the footprint / Light constructions – max. height of one story, for public information Zone B - More flexible, New construction is authorized after validation by the National Council for Tangible Cultural Heritage
2018 ⁹⁷	Zone A - integrated maintenance, restoration and conservation / road reconstruction and all works in the engineering network / reconstruction/rebuilding of existing buildings without changes to the footprint / Light constructions – max. height of one

⁹² Decision of Council of Ministers No.172, dt. 02.06.1961 “On the Proclamation of Museum Cities”

⁹³ The regulation was developed only in 1989.

⁹⁴ Regulation dt.17.04.1989 “On the protection, restoration and administration of the underground of the city of Durrës”On the approval of the regulation for the administration of archaeological zones A and B of the city of Durrës.

⁹⁵ Decision of Council of Ministers No..6, dt 7.1.2005 “On the approval of the archaeological zones within the urban settlements Shkodër, Lezhë, Krujë, Durrës, Elbasan, Berat, Vlorë, Sarandë”

⁹⁶ Decision of Council of Ministers No. 237, dt. 23.03.2011 “On

⁹⁷ Decision of Council of Ministers No. 786, dt. 26.12.2018 on the approval of archaeological

	story, for public information Zone B - more flexible thus New construction is authorized after validation by the National Council for Tangible Cultural Heritage
2020	Decision of Council of Ministers No. 399, dt 13.5.2020 "On the definition of the borders of the Archaeological Park of Durrës"
2023	The integrated Management Plan ⁹⁸ of the Archaeological zone A and B of Durrës, relies on the previous 2018 zoning.

Plyku Demaj and Buka (2024) argue that the traditional definition of Durrës' historic center has been compromised by legal frameworks that prioritize subterranean archaeology while neglecting the "upper" 20th-century architectural layers. Utilizing a dual-scale morphological approach, the authors compare historic city plans and urban vistas to demonstrate how recent high-rise developments have created a "wall" between the city and the sea, erasing historic visual corridors. While the study successfully highlights the undervaluing of Neo-Classical and Rationalist layers, it is limited by the fact that many of these structures remain unstudied and are being lost to rapid development before they can be fully documented. The study notes that much of the "upper" historic layer is still underrated and unprotected, meaning the proposed preservation guide is non-binding and faces significant economic pressure from high-rise developers.

Projected extension as a recovery of the “Old” City

In the framework of this study, the early 20th century planning interventions in Durrës present a contrasting case, shaped not by the creation of a new capital in Tirana but by the reconstruction of one of Albania's oldest cities. A destructive earthquake that happened in 1926 created both a crisis and an opportunity. Large portions of the city were damaged, necessitating reconstruction and sanitation measures. As noted by Çapeli et al. (2016), Italian planners and architects played a central role in this process, introducing a rational urban framework and modern architectural language while working within the historic city. Unlike Tirana, the intervention did not primarily focus at the edge of the existing city but within

zones “A” and “B,” of the city Durres and the plan for their preservation, protection, and administration.

⁹⁸ Decision of Council of Ministers No.831, dt 28.12.2023 "On the approval of the management plan for the archaeological zones A and B of the city of Durrës, 2023–2030"

it, reconfiguring the existing main urban axis while still proposing a shift of the civic plaza from the middle towards the end of the main boulevard that is towards the edge of the historic neighbourhood within the fortification walls. (Buka et al., 2024)



Figure 5-30 - Images showing the destructions of the 1926 earthquake in the neighbourhood within the fortification walls, Durrës⁹⁹

The reconstruction and rationalization of what is today known as Epidamn Boulevard exemplify this approach. The intervention preserved the general alignment of the historic street while straitening the line and enlarging it, introducing rationalist architecture and improved infrastructure. This process addressed functional and hygienic concerns while embedding a new architectural identity into the existing city (Menghini et al., 2012).

Recent scholarly work has described the Epidamn boulevard as a sustainable element of the city's urban form and its transformation as a dialectic between permanence and change. While the boulevard represents a modern intervention, it also maintains continuity with the historic urban structure, resulting in a layered space (Buka et al., 2023). Debates highlighted by Plyku Demaj and Buka (2024) regarding the existence and boundaries of Durrës's historic center today, consider the 20th century ensemble as an important element within the palimpsest of historic layers in the city .

⁹⁹ Source: Kabashi, G. (2020). *Leksionet e tërmetit të vitit 1926 për rindërtimin e Durrësit*. Retrieved june 2024 from <https://www.reporter.al/2020/01/16/leksionet-e-termetit-te-vitit-1926-per-rindertimin-e-durresit/>



Figure 5-31 - Images showing the plan (left) and the zoning (right) of the regulatory plan of Durrës 1942, from L. Carmignani, F. Poggi. source National Archive of Constructions, cited in (Menghini et al., 2012) The Historic Neighbourhood within the fortification walls is highlighted in yellow by the author of this study while the newly renovated axis and the proposed central square at the edge of the historic ensemble are depicted in red.

5.1.5 Finiq, Albania

This section provides results of a field study undertaken and published by the author in the framework of research in (Demaj, 2024).¹⁰⁰ The field study focuses on the ancient city of Phoninike (today the village of Finiq, Albania), which is a designated important archaeological site. Phoninike developed gradually from earlier settlements, becoming the main center and capital of Kaonia by the mid-3rd century BC, as it expanded beyond the acropolis to the surrounding slopes. The area of Finiq features a varied landscape of mountains, hills, and valleys, where the fortified hilltop settlement dominated for defensive purposes, while Roman expansion extended into the plains for agriculture. Archaeological remains in the region reflect key stages of human activity and urban development over time. In the 6th century AD, the city shifted back to higher ground due to environmental instability, reusing earlier

¹⁰⁰ The field study was undertaken as part of the research activities of the IDAUP Doctoral Program, namely the International PhD workshop “Re-Inventing Phoeniciae (Finiq): New Intersections of Tradition, Innovation, Landscapes and Tourism, organized by Polis University 09th Jan. – 20th Jan. 2023.

structures, while early excavations in 1926–1927 by Luigi Maria Ugolini helped uncover and advance the study of the site,(Leppore, 2016).

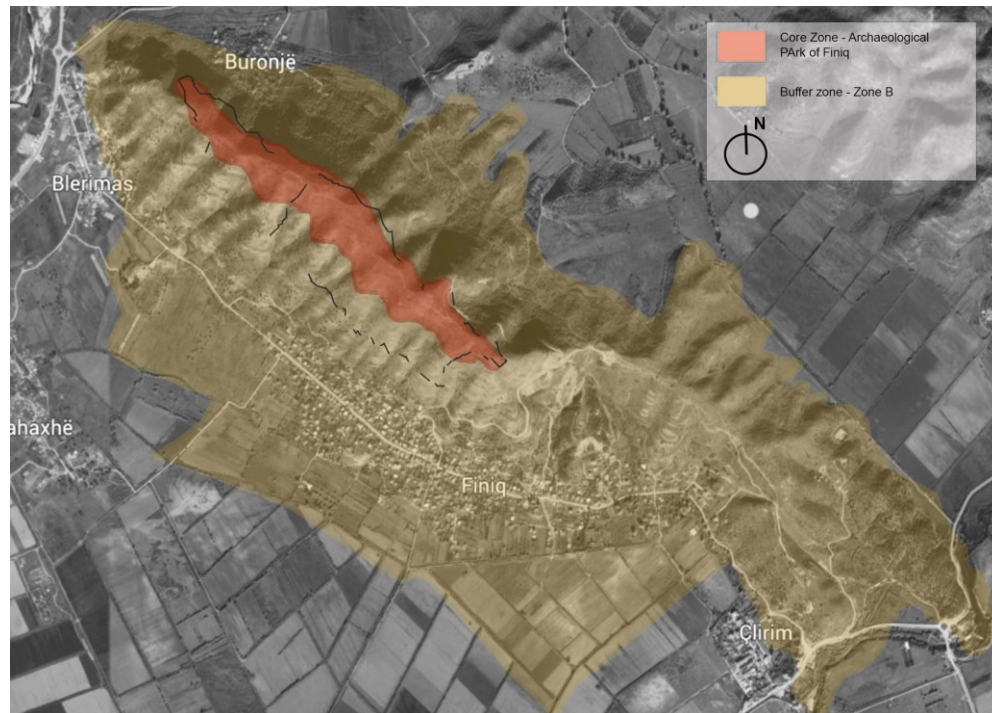


Figure 5-32 Zoning plan of the archaeological area depicting Zone A (core zone) and Zone B (zone with archaeological potential), source: Decision of Council of Ministers No.396/2005

A special and complex interrelationship between built environment (human action) and natural environment that over long time has shaped the landscape of the area(Leppore, 2016). Two main phenomena structure the urban reality in the Municipality of Finiq, being: the shrinking of the population and the low quality of urban spaces are immediately sensed by visitors.



Figure 5-33 - View of the agricultural landscape in the setting of the archaeological area, photo taken from the fortification walls, Photo credis: M.P.Demaj 2023, Source:(Demaj, 2024)

The aim of this field study was to introduce the concept of *Historic Urban Landscape (HUL)* as an effective tool to understand and manage the territory and to analyse it using the

architectural concepts of *Continuity* and *Interruption*. It was driven by the question:

How can a historic built landscape be analyzed using the architectural concepts of continuity and interruption, so that it may lead towards defining the main attributes of the territory that shape its special character and identity?

The identification and documentation of any heritage site starts by understanding and assessing its main attributes. While considering the contrasting views of the above-mentioned research, this study seeks to use the architectural concepts of continuity and interruption as analytical tools that can clarify the attributes shaping the character of the historic urban settlement of Finiq. The study explored how notions of continuity and interruption manifest across two distinct scales: urban scale and architectural scale. At the urban scale the analysis took into account land use and urban morphology considering how historic layers have influenced the contemporary land use while focusing on a juxtaposition of urban elements that contribute to the urban fabric. In the architectural and building scale, attention was given to form, materiality and detail, examining if architectural interventions preserve or challenge the prevailing continuity of the urban environment.

Results of the field study

The field study concluded that both ***continuities*** and ***interruptions*** characterize the settlement of Finiq. It is within the dynamics of their relationship and interdependencies that we should look in order to guide informed decisions on a new definition for the architecture of the area. The main problems concerning isolation and identity were suggested to be solved through the enhancement of ***continuities***. The landscape through its processes teaches integration, as here, form and process are inseparable. Understanding architecture as space, breaks down the boundaries between built environment and setting enables a more holistic approach in territorial management.



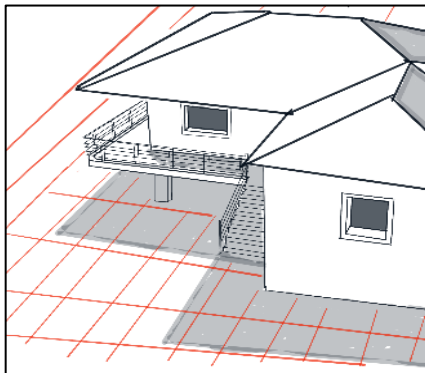
Remains of the ancient theatre as one of the main public spaces (17.000 places) and spectacular view of the landscape¹⁰¹



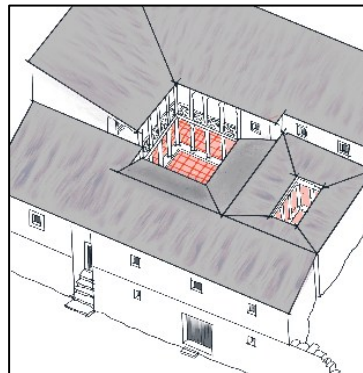
View of the city centre where lack of the public spaces is evident, photo credits M.P.Demaj 2023

Figure 5-34 – Part of the analysis on the view corridors and vistas at urban scale. Source:(Demaj, 2024)

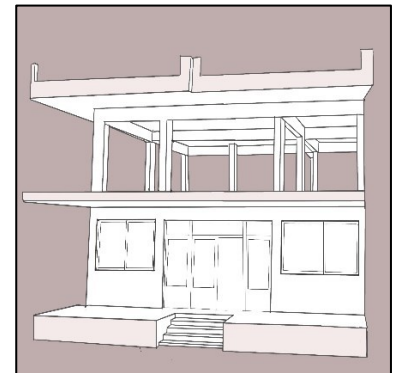
In terms of architectural and building scale, since the villages that are part of the territories of the municipality of Finiq still present examples with exceptional historical and cultural values in terms of traditional construction methods and technique, as suggested also in the general local plan 2020, drafting a building code for these settlements, was suggested as a tool that informs the preservation of values and their promotion in function of tourism development.



Example of contemporary building in Finiq, schematic drawing highlighting the private garden in the exterior.



Hypothetic reconstruction of the house with two peristils – the inner courtyards are highlighted in red



Example of unfinished buildings – schematic drawing

Figure 5-35 – Part of the Comparative analysis conducted on building typologies - architectural scale
Source: (Demaj, 2024)

¹⁰¹ Photo credit: <https://www.getyourguide.com/sarande-t122815/finiq-from-saranda-to-archaeological-park-of-finiq-t391741/>

Relevance of the field study to this research

The field study contributes to the understanding of the Type 4 of surroundings where the natural landscape serves as a buffer area. It also contributes to the discourse of viewing relationships between built areas and their natural setting in a more comprehensive and integrated way by introducing both concepts of continuity and interruption. Also, it eventually seeks to highlight the role that the historic urban landscape approach can play in developing a sense of cohesion and flow between historic and contemporary or between built and natural setting.

5.1.6 Selected Fortifications (Fortified Settlements), Albania

This section displays the results of a field study undertaken and published by Demaj et al. (2024), in the framework of this research. The impact of urban development is analysed through a philological reading of the space of 18 case studies, emphasizing the transformations over time and the current state of the space in and around the fortification walls. The field study consisted in examining the vulnerabilities of 18 Albanian fortifications to urban sprawl, identifying that current buffer zones are often arbitrary "one-size-fits-all" distances. It is connected to understanding how the historic fortified settlements have faced urban growth in different historic periods. The relationships of the fortification walls as borders of the historic settlements with their surroundings is evaluated. Although the selected cases represented were of the category of fortified settlements, in the framework of Albanian legislation for Cultural Heritage most of them are listed as single monuments and were equipped by a normative buffer zone of fixed distance. In this respect the hypothesis that fixed distance buffer areas set up without detailed studies based on values and attributes of the monument are static and rigid tools is tested through this field study. The methodology used for the field study had a dual focus as below:

1. Historic research - How the fortification walls have faced urban growth, is investigated taking into consideration changes in their immediate context in different historic periods.
2. Spatial analysis is conducted mainly based on juxtaposition and comparison of maps of different periods as well as based on observations in field comparing to historic photos or aerial photos of the different case studies.

Utilizing a philological reading of space and the juxtaposition of period maps, the authors categorize development impacts into three types: building within, adjacent to, or in the traditional landscape of the walls. The field study highlights that rigid, distance-based buffer zones fail to protect visual relationships and structural stability. It categorizes the specific physical and visual impacts of urban sprawl on fortified historic cores.

Results of the field study

The study identifies that many buffer zones were established without specific criteria, but the implementation of the proposed "technical preservation guidelines" remains a challenge for under-resourced local governments.

5.1.7 Relevance of the field studies for the research.

All cases contributed to the understanding of the four main conceptual types of surroundings introduced in this research (see Section 1.3). They acted as laboratories to use the dual scale method of analysis as well as the conceptual analysis tools of continuation and interruption.

The results of the field studies in these Albanian cases confirm that buffer zones should not be instruments solely designed to prevent change, but rather to manage it through a values-based approach. By identifying the specific attributes of a site's setting, architects and planners can move toward a more sustainable and holistic understanding of the historic built landscape and towards a more responsive and informed approach when it comes to project design in these surroundings. The findings suggest that when normative borders are applied inflexibly, they can lead to the creation of "non-places" devoid of relational identity (Cases of Tirana and selected Fortifications).

Reconciling conservation and development requires identifying the specific attributes of a site's setting, such as visual corridors, traditional building techniques, and geo-morphological relationships, and integrating them into a holistic planning framework that respects the city as a multi-layered structure in time and space (drawn from the architectural and urban scale analysis in Durrës and in Tirana).

The comparative analysis of Tirana and Durrës reveals two distinct planning strategies through which authoritarian urban models engaged with pre-existing cities in early twentieth-century Albania. Both these ensembles exhibit strong organizational coherence and have become recognized as significant components of the cities' early twentieth-century heritage. The continuation and adaptation of these spaces under socialist planning after 1945 as noted by Mëhilli (2017) and Dharmo et al. (2019) further underscore their enduring structural and spatial value. By focusing on the relationship between newly introduced authoritarian urban models and historic urban fabric, this study contributes to broader discussions on authoritarian urbanism. It demonstrates that power can be spatially asserted not only through rupture and destruction, but also through calculated coexistence, continuity, and the strategic redefinition of urban centres.

The field works particularly the use of a dual scale approach for the analysis is useful since it provides a methodology for understanding values and attributes of historic centers which

constitutes the basis for moving towards a Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach.

The discussion of the field study in Durrës focuses on the fact that with time the historic urban and architectural features of the living built environment above the ground have been underrated and unvaluated. Due to this fact their reference in the designation documents has diminished through the years, favoring more the archaeological values which are in large part destroyed by uncontrolled high rise developments but also in large part still unearthed and unknown. Plyku Demaj and Buka (2024) argue that the traditional definition of Durrës' historic centre has been compromised by legal frameworks that prioritize subterranean archaeology while neglecting the "upper" 20th-century architectural layers.

The field work on the impact of urban sprawl for selected 18 fortifications is useful as it advocates for a values-based approach to defining buffer zones rather than relying on standard metric offsets.

5.2 Case studies and Precedents in International Context

This section aims to analyse a selected number of precedents, case studies of historic centres and their designated buffer zones (in case no official buffer zone is in place the immediate surroundings are analysed). Precedents are proposed or realized new development projects in the immediate surroundings, wider surroundings or within the Historic Centre. This section shall explore how Indicators (both Regulatory and Desing indicators) provided in Chapter 4 manifest across two distinct scales: Urban scale (spatial development) and Architectural scale (architectural design).

Selection of Case Studies and precedents

The identification and documentation of any heritage site start by understanding and assessing the values that sustain the OUV and the main attributes that express those values.. While considering the contrasting views of the above-mentioned research, this study seeks to use the architectural concepts of continuity and interruption as analytical tools that can clarify the attributes shaping the character of the historic urban settlements of the selected case studies.

The case studies (as shown in the Figure 5-36), have been selected based on several criteria:

1. They are selected from the European region. This criterion relies on the geographical argument rather than political one. This research departed from problems identified in the national context in Albania. Albania developed its policy in preservation and restoration of cultural heritage as part of the developments in the European Region.
2. All of them hold the protection status World Heritage Site. Nearly all of them have a

designated buffer zone around the Historic centre. The ones that do not have this normative, eg. Edinburgh has been selected in order to add to the research the approach of dealing with surroundings of historic centre even if they are formally designated as part of the World Heritage system but have in place protection normative for the cultural heritage and their surroundings, at national level.

3. They display similar challenges in their surroundings or buffer Zones, especially development pressure, tourism pressure, risk of gentrification etc.
4. They are designated as historic centres, based on cultural heritage criteria of the World Heritage Convention. For the World Heritage sites, reference is made to the Nomination criteria (i-vi).
5. Cities like Vienna, London, Paris, Rome have been included since apart from their very rich heritage, they have been at the centre of big transformations (as analysed in Chapter 2.1). All the selected case studies have been selected to contain a juxtaposition of urban layers from a range of historic period contributing as such to the discourse of differentiation of conservation areas in both the historic centre and buffer zone.

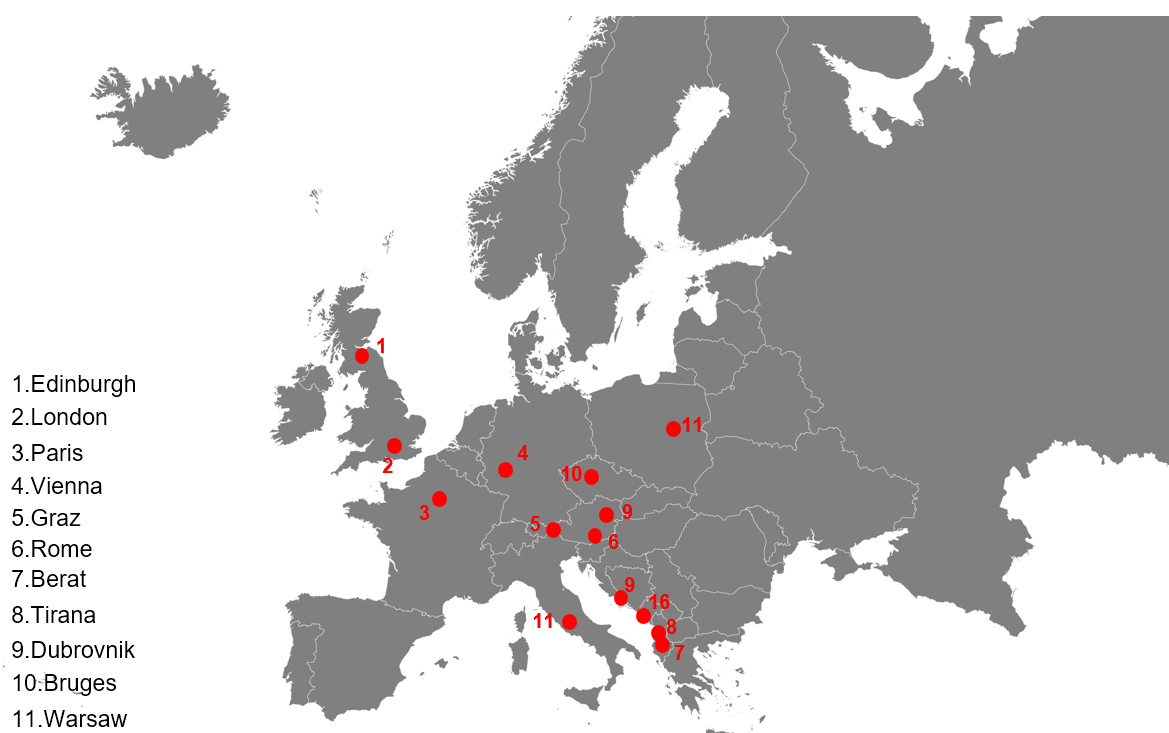


Figure 5-36 – Location of the selected case studies.

Table 5-6 Connection of each case study with the identified buffer area conceptual typologies.

Case Study	Buffer Type 1	Buffer Type 2	Buffer Type 3	Buffer Type 4
Rome, Italy (Historic Urban Centre – WHP)	▲	▲	▲	▲
Brugge, Belgium (Historic Urban Centre - WHP)	▲	▲		▲
Paris, France (Historic Urban Centre- WHP)	▲	▲		
Edinburgh, Scotland (Historic Urban Centre- WHP)	▲	▲		▲
Warsaw, Poland (Historic Urban City - WHP)		▲		
Dubrovnik, Croatia (Historic Urban City - WHP)	▲			▲
Vienna, Austria (Historic Urban City - WHP)	▲	▲		
Graz Austria, (Historic Urban City - WHP)	▲	▲		
London, Great Britain (Historic Urban City - WHP)				

Method of Analysis

The method of analysis for the international case studies in this chapter is mostly desk-based (relying mainly on official material from the World Heritage documents, being Management plans of the world heritage sites and / expert technical reports prepared either by the state parties or by the advisory bodies of UNESCO, ICOMOS – ICCROM).

The cases selected in Albania combine field work and desk-based research since have been in the focus of field work undertaken by the author in the framework of this research.

5.2.1 Rome, Italy

The “Historic Centre of Rome, the Properties of the Holy See in that City Enjoying Extraterritorial Rights and San Paolo Fuori le Mura”, is a transboundary world heritage property shared between Italy and the Holy See. It was inscribed in the World Heritage List in 1980 and the property was extended in 1990 to include the Holy See, based on criteria: (i), (ii), (iii), (iv), and (vi).

Its inscription is fully justified since Rome is one of the most significant achievements in the history of humanity, due to its unique layered history where the archaeological, historical-artistic and monumental heritage, is perfectly integrated into the urban fabric of Rome, encompassing three millennia of urban development. It represents the foundation of Western civilization, the centre of the Roman Empire, and the spiritual heart of the Christian world.

While the first inscription included the main archaeological monuments within the perimeter of the Aurelian walls and the archaeological area of the Appia Antica just outside the walls. The current inscription includes the entire area of the Historic Centre bordered by the city walls until their maximum extension of the 17th century.

The Buffer Zone

The size of the Buffer zone matches the areas included in the General Urban Plan (PRG) that is most of the fabrics of the Historic City of the Rome. It allows an adequate management system based on national and regional regulatory tools (archaeological, architectural and landscape constrains). Adopted in 2024, the buffer zone aims to protect the views toward the historic centre from the surrounding hills (*I Colli*) managing the visual impact of modern infrastructure in the suburban periphery. It creates a "transition belt" that includes the 19th-century expansions and protected parklands like the Appia Antica.

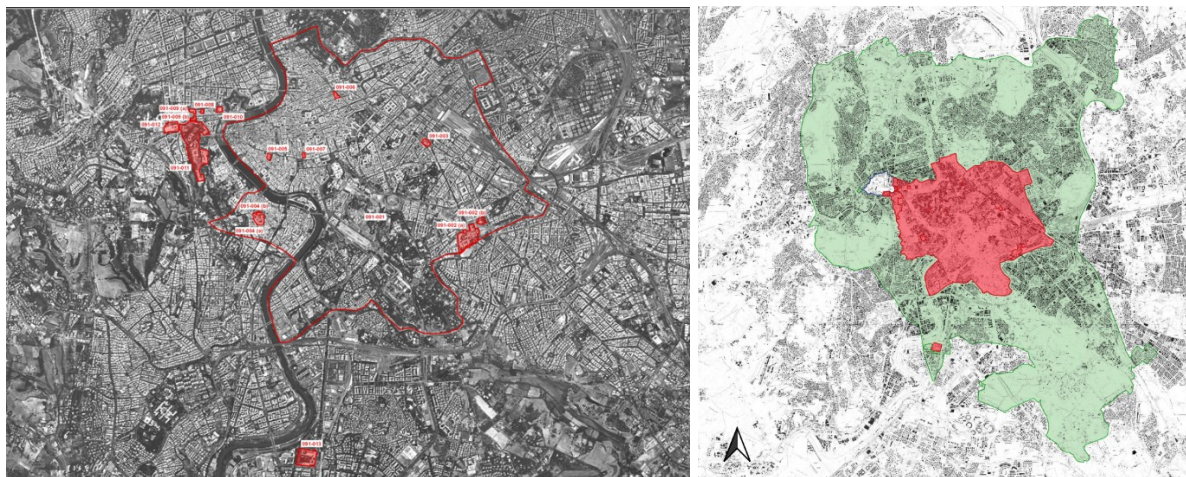


Figure 5-37 - (Left) Map of the Historic Centre after the inclusion of the Holy See (2009), (right) Historic Centre with the Buffer zone (2024), Source:(World Heritage Centre, 1980a)

Values and Attributes – Historic Centre

One of the most significant value is the extraordinary number of monumental remains of antiquity that Rome conserves. This includes archaeological pre-existences and large central archaeological areas as well as city walls and gates systems. Having an uninterrupted urban life for three millennia, Rome seems a "Palimpsest" where historic urban layers are physically integrated with each other. These include built areas stratifications, road network and historical cultural paths through the millennia.



Figure 5-38 – View of the archaeological layers of Rome, photo of the author (2025)

The evidence of Christianity through the millennia is expressed through the presence of religious buildings and symbols of Christianity, processions and pilgrimage routes. The inclusion of Holy See properties jointly with the Italian state, symbolizes the city's dual role as a national and spiritual capital. The built heritage in Rome is interconnected with the natural landscape, expressed through the system of green parks, villas as well as the system of historic aqueducts and monumental fountains that define the city's scenography.



Figure 5-39 - View of monumental fountains in Rome, photo of the author (2025)

Values and Attributes – Buffer zone

The fact that the management plan includes a detailed description and mapping of the values and attributes in the buffer zone shows the value given to the buffer zone as complementary and natural extension of the historic centre rather than a division between two distinct and unrelated areas.

Among the attributes present in the buffer zone the Management Plan highlights its

significance for the archaeological continuity and visual continuity or intervisibility, in relation to visual and perceptive qualities. Main access roads, visual cones understood as 'continuous view', are important for highlighting the landscape character and blending of architecture and nature. The Tiber River is one of the main natural attributes that has shaped through Millennia the built landscape of Rome.

While the Buffer zone comprises all areas included in the General Urban Plan (PRG) it has specifications on the fabrics relating to the Historic city, fact which contributes to the role of the buffer zone as intermediary area and not a dividing area. The buffer zone includes also main areas of urban transformation/ transformability, identified by the current General Urban Plan as well as areas to be used for site services. (The city of Rome, 2024 - 2030)

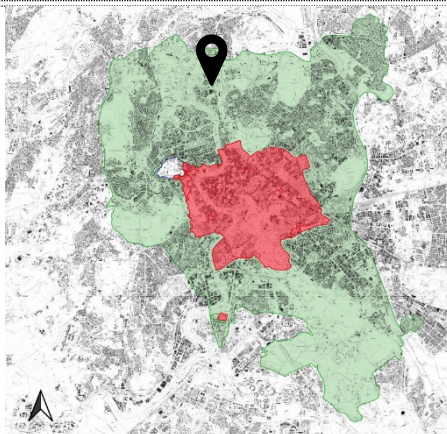
Analysis based on Regulatory Indicators

<i>R-U.1 Development Pressure Challenges</i>	A development pressure is acknowledged in the property, so the identification of a buffer zone is seen as essential for the full protection, conservation and enhancement of the values as well as for allowing control of development, particularly interventions likely to impact the skyline of the property and/or its integrity, (ICOMOS, 2024) Modern mobility development projects as well as risk of gentrification due to the high touristic appeal of Rome remain two of most pressing issues.
<i>R-U.2 Existence of a management plan</i>	Yes, The current Management plan of the WH property 2024-2030 has been developed following the methodological approach based on values and attributes that convey the values that maintain the OUV. In the framework of this management plan values and attributes within both historical centre and buffer zone are identified and thoroughly mapped. (The city of Rome, 2024 - 2030)
<i>R-U.3 Regulatory limits / control of urban tissue</i>	The System of Urban Tissues identified by the General Urban Plan (PRG) is not only a protection tool for the Property and the heritage that is beyond the walls, but also a management tool.
<i>R-U.4 Approach towards new constructions proposals</i>	Project based Any transformation concerning the Historical city is subject to a prior assessment of the project, which is guided by two other instruments, the Charter for Quality and the

	Guide for the quality of interventions. (The city of Rome, 2024 - 2030) Issues of visual cone analysis, preventive archaeology as well as material continuity (travertine, brick, plaster etc.) are among common requirements.
<i>R-U.5 Governance</i>	The Capitoline Superintendence for cultural heritage of Rome (<i>Roma Capitale</i>) is the oldest territorial institution that deals with the Conservation of the Heritage of Rome. It oversees projects for to the recovery, restoration and valorisation of cultural heritage. The Capitoline Superintendent is the Site Manager of the UNESCO Property of Rome. The Directorate for Interventions on Monumental Buildings (<i>Direzione Interventi su Edilizia Monumentale</i>) is responsible for the maintenance of the existing heritage. The General Urban Plan governs the territory according to three large systems: (1) settlement system, (2) environment and agriculture system and (3) services, infrastructures and facilities system. While the The city of Rome (2024 - 2030) states that the establishment of the buffer zone is part of a platform for analysing and monitoring the conservation status of the property, for the advisory bodies of UNESCO it is not yet clear how the overall management structure of the property relates to the buffer zone. (ICOMOS, 2024)
<i>R-U.6 Community Engagement</i>	The local community that engages within "Rioni" associations (neighborhood groups) are vocal watchdogs. While public information is available, residents often feel bypassed by large-scale tourism infrastructure projects.
<i>R-A.1 Independent Assessments (ex. UNESCO / ICOMOS etc.)</i>	Yes, Advisory body evaluations have had an important role in shaping the buffer zone tool. While the buffer zone delineation was proposed since 2017, it was referred by the World Heritage Committee with the request to provide further details on the mechanisms in place in the proposed buffer zone to assess the impact of development projects on the World Heritage property. It also requested indications on how

	and when the delimitations of the proposed buffer zone will be transcribed into existing local and national regulations in order to provide a statutory status to its boundaries. (ICOMOS, 2024)
--	--

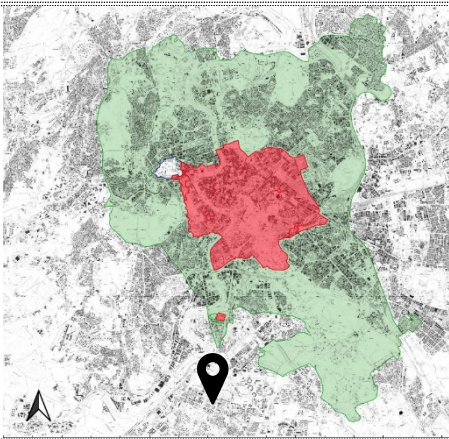
Two projects realized in the buffer zone shall be analysed based on the design indicators one being Maxxi – National Museum of 21st Century arts (2010) and New Rome /EUR convention Hall and Hotel ‘the Cloud’ (2016). Both projects have been launched through a Design Competition.

Name of the project	1. MAXXI – National Museum of 21st Century Arts (Zaha Hadid architects)
Year launched	Design competition 1998; construction 2002–2009; opened 2010
Location	In the Buffer Zone. 
Compliance with Heritage status	When the design competition was launched and also during the construction, the Buffer zone provision was not yet in place, so the project proposal was located outside of the Historic core, in the wider setting, in a former military barracks site (<i>Caserma Montello</i>). Rather than complying stylistically, it is a contained modern insertion in an existing urban fabric. Recently in 2024, the Maxxi museum, with only 15 years of existence is declared as an asset of cultural heritage.¹⁰²

¹⁰² Source: <https://artslife.com/2025/05/29/il-museo-delle-arti-del-xxi-secolo-diventa-monumento-nazionale/#:~:text=Il%20MAXXI%20diventa%20%22Monumento%20Nazionale%22>

	 MAXXI Museum – photo of the author (2025)
Compliance to spatial planning normative	The area is subject to provisions of the General Urban Plan and due to the fact, that it was proposed to be located in a former military barracks area, it fulfilled the spatial planning requirement for revitalization of industrial areas.
Public Discussion	Generally positive as it was seen as an important project for the regeneration of the district.
D-U.1. Urban morphology	Located in Flaminio, a 20th-century urban extension rather than the historic center. Introducing a fluid geometrical concept it develops an narrative that it is inspired by the “layered city” concept, reflecting a modern layer in the Rome’s stratified history.
D-U.2. City views and vistas	It is conceived as a campus, and it is not oriented in main vistas corridors rather it creates inward vistas and itineraries.
D-A.1. Specific architectural features	It definitely has consciously selected different architectural features from the historic architectures in Rome. The use of Concrete and Glass dominates.
D-A.2 Link to specific historic phases (building typology, genre)	It is proposed in a former military barracks area. It managed to provide integration with the surroundings via open spaces.

Name of the project	2. New Rome /EUR convention Hall and Hotel ‘the Cloud’ / “La Nuvola”, (Massimiliano and Doriana Fuksas architects)
Year launched	Competition 1998; construction 2007–2016; opened 2016
Location	Outside of the Buffer zone, in the wider setting. EUR district, Rome, Italy

Compliance with Heritage status	When the design competition was launched and also during the construction, the Buffer zone provision was not yet in place, so the project proposal was located outside of the Historic core, in the wider setting. 
Compliance to spatial planning normative	EUR district where the project is located is a 1930s rationalist planned area.¹⁰³ 
Public Discussion	Generally positive.
D-U.1. Urban morphology	The building follows the orthogonal lines of the surrounding 1930s rationalist architecture. The spaces surrounding the centre serve as two public squares offering a new meeting area in this busy part of Rome.
D-U.2. City views and vistas	It acts itself as an urban landmark.
D-A.1. Specific architectural features	As explained from the architectural studio, the specific architectural features include three distinct architectural concepts: the basement, the “Theca” - outer shell and facade of the convention Hall and “Cloud” - independent cocoon-like structure, and the “Blade” – autonomous building functioning as a hotel.
D-A.2 Link to specific historic phases (building typology, genre)	The building is inserted in the rationalist orthogonal grid.

¹⁰³ <https://fuksas.com/the-cloud/>

Conclusions on Rome

Key lessons from the analysis of the relationship between historic core and buffer zone in World Heritage property, Rome are the establishment of the buffer zone as a complementary conservation and development zone in addition to its role to protect the historic core. The identification and mapping of the values and attributes in both historic centre and buffer zone is an important basis on which to ground assessment of the impact of future development projects both within the World Heritage property and the buffer zone.

In the case of Rome management system, it is particularly evident the role that UNESCO and its advisory bodies have played in grounding the buffer zone tool within the spatial planning policies and in the analysis of values and attributes.

Regarding the selected projects they are both selected through a Design Competition process. They are proposed outside of the Historic core due to the strict “preservation first” regulations in place. At the time of proposal the buffer zone tool was not in place yet they were subject to the spatial planning mechanisms that concern the wider context. Proposed as projects that aim to regenerate the urban units where they were inserted, they soon managed to gain importance as open urban spaces considering the dense urban layout of the historic core.

In fact it is the General Urban plan that provides conditions for development areas and as such it seems that the wider setting is a natural attraction point for big scale developments that in a certain scale decentralize functions from the historic city core.

5.2.2 Brugge, Belgium

The historic centre of Brugge is inscribed in the world heritage list in 2000, based on cultural criteria (ii), (iv), and (vii). Its OUV relies on its outstanding values as a medieval settlement which has maintained its historic fabric over centuries. It was a primary commercial and cultural metropolis in medieval Europe and served as the cradle of the Flemish Primitives school of painting.

*Criterion ii: The City centre Town of Bruges is **testimony, over a long period, of a considerable exchange of influences on the development of architecture, particularly in brick Gothic**, as well as favouring innovative artistic influences in the development of medieval painting, being the birthplace of the school of the Flemish Primitives.*

*Criterion iv: The City centre Town of Bruges is **an outstanding example of an architectural ensemble, illustrating significant stages in the commercial and cultural fields in medieval Europe**, of which the public, social, and religious institutions are a living testimony.*

*Criterion vi: The town of Bruges has been the **birthplace of the Flemish Primitives and a centre of patronage and development of painting in the Middle Ages** with artists such as Jan van Eyck and Hans Memling.*

Figure 5-40 – Criteria based on which Brugge is proclaimed World Heritage, Source: (The city council, 2012)

While the historic core delineation comprises, the whole egg-shaped city including its canals, a buffer zone of 200 m was established around the historic centre, with a size of about 40 % of the total historic Core zone area¹⁰⁴. The buffer zone follows the line of the former 12th-century city walls and the ramparts (*Vesten*). It is designed to protect the "green belt" that encircles the city and ensures that modern developments in the suburban periphery do not encroach on the city's low-rise silhouette, see Figure 5-41.

The management plan of the World Heritage property of Bruges is a joint effort between the urban planning department and the department for heritage conservation and heritage management within the City of Brugge. (The city council, 2012)

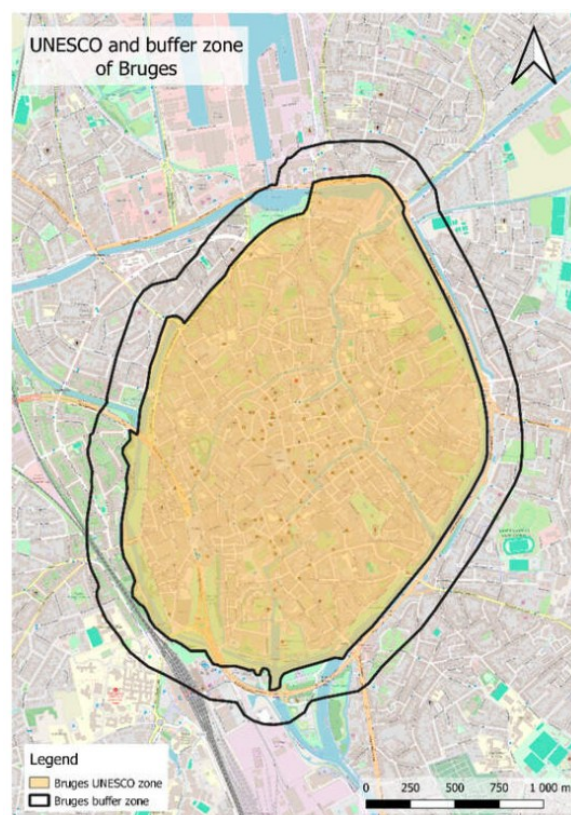


Figure 5-41 – Unesco Core Zone and Buffer Zone of Bruges, Source: (Vanhuele & Vanneste, 2025)

¹⁰⁴ Size of the buffer zone: 168 ha, Size of the Property area: 410 ha

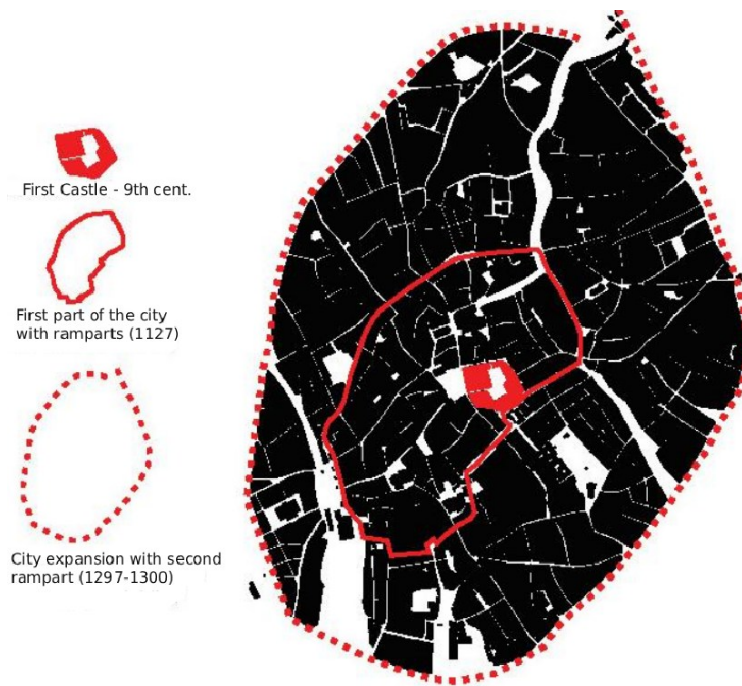


Figure 5-42 – Diagram of the historic growth of the Bruges through history. Source: (The city council, 2012)

As it is seen from the diagram in Figure 5-42, the city has had an organic expansion since the 7th- 9th cent. It experienced a decisive phase of development during the 10th-14th centuries, when it became an administrative centre.



Figure 5-43 – Map Showing the phases of urban expansion as well as different morphological areas based on developments in different historic periods.

The city demonstrates to have had a remarkable transformation of the past century, mainly on the outskirts of the city centre. Expansions of the city outside the walls happened in 12th cent and 19th cent because of the growing economic activities and need for workers. The introduction of the railway in the 19th century caused a significant transformation in the city. Even though Bruges was not damaged during World War I and World War II, it suffered the post-war crisis which led to great degeneration of the city centre, and eventually demolition of historical but dilapidated heritage which was criticised firstly by the citizens.

Heritage preservation policies and Urban Planning Policies

Following the creation in 1971 of a City Department of Historical Monuments and Urban Renovation, a Master Plan is drawn up in 1972 formulating policy objectives for the revival of the city.

The approach followed in the master plan was that of a landscape instead of individual monuments leading to the expansion of both legal protections (43 designated individual buildings at 1972) as well as protection of a number of zones (7 designated landscapes at 1972). Assessment of the architectural value of the built heritage followed grouping them based on their authenticity and values as *architectura major* (first and second category), *architectura minor* and buildings of no architectural value. An one-size-fits to all 50 m buffer zone is applied to the individual monuments within the Historic Centre.

The Master plan defined a number of conservation zones, core zones and action zones (essential to the urban landscape). The importance of the visual integrity of the urban landscape was deemed a priority.

In 1993 a renewed Municipal Building Regulation determined the flow in the city centre and along the ring roads as well as gave priority to additional protection of “living” in the city (provisions for dividing up houses, separate access to homes above shops, etc.). The first Spatial Policy Plan for the entire territory of the city of Bruges (1996) had provisions on focussing the large-scale urban development projects to the wide environs of the station and *Sint-Pieterskaai*, a limit on the number of hotels in the city centre and a concentration of day tourism in a tourist core area in the Zand-Markt-Beguinaage triangle.

Values and Attributes

The following attributes are identified as tangible elements that bear the OUV.

Brick Gothic Architecture:

The city is defined by its characteristic red-brick Gothic buildings, which influenced architectural styles throughout Northern Europe and the Baltic. Still a diversity of architectures is present in the historic centre.



Source: photo of the author, 2025

Water ways and bridges:

The preservation of the 12th-century organic street layout and the "arteries" of the city, the canal network, which remain largely intact.



Source: photo of the author, 2025

The Three Towers:

The vertical hierarchy of the Belfry, the Church of Our Lady, and St. Salvator's Cathedral dominate the city townscape.



Source: photo from the Management Plan (2012)

Analysis based on Regulatory Indicators

<i>R-U.1 Development Pressure Challenges</i>	As a result of the historic transformations, 1.the large, constructed blocks outside the first city walls increasingly become fragmented and re-parcelled. 2.There is strong densification of the urban fabric.
--	--

<i>R-U.2 Existence of a management plan</i>	Yes, since 2012 It was prepared jointly by the urban planning department and the department for cultural heritage
<i>R-U.3 Regulatory limits / control of urban tissue</i>	Bruges follows the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach. New constructions must: Respect the "Brugge Scale": No new building may compete with the height of the historic towers. However the Management Plan (2012) foresees drawing up an assessment framework for future high-rise projects entails defining guidelines and principles aiming to use it as a checklist when assessing new applications. Material Harmony: Preference for traditional brickwork, though contemporary reinterpretations are seen if they maintain the "rhythmic" quality of the streetscape, see photo below.  Source: photo of the author, 2025 Visual Permeability: Maintaining sightlines from the ramparts toward the historic centre.
<i>R-U.4.Approach towards new constructions proposals</i>	The city of Bruges follows a contextual project-related approach where the spatial analysis of the urban structures within the project boundaries and in the immediate context is a requirement. It also means there is sufficient flexibility and freedom to approach each project separately. Competitions are also used as a tool.
<i>R-U.5 Governance</i>	The city is governed at municipal level. It is managed by City of Brugge in collaboration with the Flemish Heritage Agency. In the national legislation there is no specific legal status attributed to the World Heritage properties and their protection. Heritage is the

	responsibility of the Regions and Communities, which have their own legislation to protect it (codes, decrees, bylaws, etc.) (World Heritage Centre & ICOMOS, 2010)
<i>R-U.6 Community Engagement</i>	A strong community engagement, which is evident also through history. Based on the Management plan (2012) citizen foundations were particularly active to protest against the demolitions of valuable heritage during the post war period. They also called a monitoring UNESCO mission in 2010 due to concerns on building permits. Today the city employs a "Future of Brugge" platform for participatory planning. However, local city guides and heritage NGOs act as significant watchdogs, often challenging the "Disneyfication" of the centre.
<i>R-A.1 Independent Assessments (ex. UNESCO / ICOMOS etc.)</i>	Yes, ICOMOS conducted a Joint Reactive Monitoring Mission¹⁰⁵ in 2010 following concerns about large-scale projects.

The Morphological Composition

The Management plan (2012) has identified morphological elements/attributes that compose the urban landscape layers such as waterways and bridges, green spaces (whether public or not), streets and squares, the urban skyline, the architecture, the city's silhouette, the perspectives/views, the connections with the environment, etc.



¹⁰⁵ Joint reactive monitoring missions are specialized, on-site, expert missions authorized by the World Heritage Committee to evaluate the state of conservation of sites in danger, usually due to threats from development, disasters, or mismanagement. They are "joint" because they involve collaboration between UNESCO's World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies such as IUCN or ICOMOS.

The architectural diversity follows the main morphological developments of the city displaying examples of 18th-19th and 20th century buildings that coexist in the urban units.



*13th-17th cent.
Typical Gothic (brick) style*



18th cent. classic late Baroque, Rococo and Empire



19th cent – classic, monumental

Figure 5-44 – Architectural Diversity – Examples of buildings based on different periods of construction. Source: Management Plan 2012

Precedents Analysis based on Design Indicators

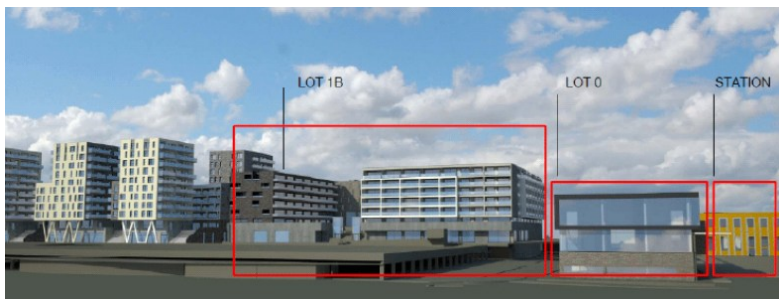
In 2008 numerous requests from private civil society foundations were sent to UNESCO stating that a number of projects that could negatively impact the OUV and integrity and authenticity of the World Heritage property, were under consideration or being executed. Two projects have been selected for the purpose of this research. One being proposed in the historic centre (where a 50 m buffer zone requirement for individual buildings exist) and one in the border between the historic centre and buffer zone.

Name of the project	1. The interventions at the Casselberg, Sept Tours and Bouclier Français	
Year launched	2003-2008	
Location	Within the Historic Centre	
Compliance with Heritage status	The Building is proposed as a reuse of an existing building. The proposal consists in a new type of façade. It was subject to many negotiations between the Commission of Urban Aesthetics and the proponents until in 2008  The new building proposal of 2003 was almost completely independent of the surrounding historic buildings enabling the restoration of the rear façade Source:(World Heritage Centre & ICOMOS, 2010).  The façade design is subject to repeated discussions with the Commission for Urban Aesthetics between 2003 and 2008, Source:(World Heritage Centre & ICOMOS, 2010).	

	 Final proposal for the Hotel façade approved by the Commission in September 2008, Source:(World Heritage Centre & ICOMOS, 2010).
Compliance to spatial planning normative	The project aimed to renovate several historic buildings and to construct a new building as a replacement for the former telephone exchange building. While seemingly compliant to the spatial planning normative in terms of the volume proposed, it was subject to many negotiations regarding the visual character.
Public Discussion	The project was subject of many complaints from the civil society foundations that are active in the city. Their main concern was the harsh confrontation between contemporary architecture and historic buildings.
D-U.1. Urban morphology	The new extension respects the volume and proportions of the former telephone exchange building.
D-U.2. City views and vistas	The new proposal does not directly face along the canals so it does not directly disrupt the vista along the canal as well as the visual corridor with the Belfry tower.
D-A.1. Specific architectural features	Rather than being compliant with the specific architectural features of the historic centre, the project proposal evokes a radical and innovative architecture.
D-A.2 Link to specific historic phases (building typology, genre)	Other than respecting the volume and proportions of the former telephone exchange building, it does not link to any specific building typology or phases

Name of the project	2. Apartments in Gulden Vlieslaan
Year launched	2008
Location	At the border between the Historic centre and Buffer zone 
Compliance with Heritage status	The Project consists in a new insertion in an existing unit with apartments.  Apartment project realisation “Gulden Vlieslaan”, source: (World Heritage Centre & ICOMOS, 2010)  Views on the Apartments “Gulden Vlieslaan”, source: (World Heritage Centre & ICOMOS, 2010)
Compliance to spatial planning	Compliant, yet the requirements in the spatial planning normative limit height of the buildings only in relation to the Belfry tower yet in this case they have failed to see the impact of the height in the overall visual scape of the urban

normative	unit.
Public Discussion	Subject to complaints from the civil society
D-U.1. Urban morphology	The building is inserted in an existing row type development. While not taking into account the urban morphology, it is also a proof of the fact that in projects like this for new insertions in the urban fabric the impact must be considered in a broad context not limited to the 50m protective area.
D-U.2. City views and vistas	It has resulted to have a negative impact on the city views.
D-A.1. Specific architectural features	Based on the Reactive Monitoring Report (World Heritage Centre & ICOMOS, 2010), the City authorities acknowledge to having neglected the visual impact from the World Heritage property.

Name of the project	3. Concentration of commercial and administrative capacity in proximity to the World Heritage property
Year launched	Proposal
Location	At the border between the Historic centre and Buffer zone 
Compliance with Heritage status	 Development Railway Station and Surroundings – project “Balcony on Bruges”

	 Further developments “Balcony on Bruges”, Source: (World Heritage Centre & ICOMOS, 2010)
Compliance to spatial planning normative	The Spatial plan foresees the concentration of big scale commercial and administrative capacities out of the historic centre. So, it complies with this vision
Public Discussion	No public discussion undertaken. The project has been subject to negative technical reviews from the UNESCO / ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring mission.
D-U.1. Urban morphology	It is outside of the Historic centre, yet it does not relate to any urban morphological features of the historic phases of the city.
D-U.2. City views and vistas	Due to its big scale it may negatively intervene in the city views.
D-A.1. Specific architectural features	It proposes a generic architecture not related to any specific historic architectural features nor an interpretation of them.

Conclusions on Bruges

An important characteristic of Historic centre of Bruges is that while it seems a compact settlement it is the result of several significant transformations through its history. and has managed to conserve its urban and architectural character. The establishment of the buffer area in the limited area of the historic green belt is a significant sign to the priority given to the historic centre while the Buffer area seem to serve as its literal meaning (an empty area that divides two zones with different tensions). It is also a sign that the pressure of development is not out of the historic centre but within it. It is clear from the precedents analysis that the 50m one-size-fits-to all buffer zones for individual monuments is not

effective and the landscape approach should be enforced. Also Heritage Impact assessments seem to be useful tools to effectively manage change and to minimise any adverse impacts since the early stages of project proposal.

A good practice is that Bruges follows the HUL approach and that the governance is very effective at the local level. It is a good example of collaboration between territorial planning units and heritage preservation units. Considering that it is a living city the city of Bruges gives equal priority to the heritage management, but also housing quality, a high-quality approach to public and greenery, together with a stringent mobility policy are jointly in the focus of the local government. Technical reports focused on new proposals consider the benefits of this however raise attention to the importance of a balance between urban development and heritage preservation.

An important point in the formulation of a landscape approach in the case of Bruges, was carrying out the morphological analysis of Bruges. This enables the correct understanding of the historical evolution that the urban fabric underwent and how it was defined. Understanding the architectural and morphological qualities that define the World Heritage site is crucial because the historical reflection is a constant factor when it comes to assessment of new development proposals.

5.2.3 Paris, France

Paris became a great centre of monumental building during the 1700s under the rule of Louis XV. The Tuileries and the Champs Élysées, Place Vendôme and especially Place de Concordia display great examples of Baroque wideness, geometrical order, undefined character of views and architectural unity. (Giovannoni, 1931, p. 46)

Unlike London that was an example of an open city, Paris was a closed city, bounded by surrounding walls. It is not surprising that the most elaborate and precocious plan originated in an enclosed city where the disorder created by spatial limitations was more shocking and hopeless. Although France in 1850 was economically behind Great Britain, Paris was the object of the first perfected plan for regularization of a city in the industrial age. The Haussmann plan is the perfect case that can show relationship between “old” and “new” at a city scale. The purpose of Haussmann was to transform into a whole the urban agglomeration of Paris. The Haussmann documentation was not static. He understood the city as any other organism, and he viewed it both prospectively and retrospectively. He was acquainted with the city’s past which enabled him to determine key zones and axes and poles around which development occurs. His main actions were to create a “general circulatory system” thus solving traffic flow by conceiving a network of through streets which have no significance in

themselves but are an essentially mean of connection. Connection points each conceived as plazas were called nodes of relation. Due to the fact that archaeological vision was born with the French revolution, the Baron was attentive to spare monuments of the past from destruction, still the idea of preserving the urban texture was not yet mature in 1850-60s (Choay, 1970). Jallon et al. (2017) state that although Haussman ordered the networks according to the means of financing (municipal or federal), this did not affect the hierarchy of the urban fabric, that is he distinguished the primary, secondary and tertiary networks. The same logic underlying this triple organization of road networks results in a distinction of primary, secondary and tertiary spaces each corresponding to the respective network.

Choay (1970) considers as the most serious error of Haussman was to destroy irrevocably the tightly woven and diversified fabric of Ile de la Cite, whose new blocks of giant buildings condemned it to death. His approach can be summed up as a monotonous repetition of the principles of Neoclassicism, uniform frontage lines along broad, strait streets, research into perspective effects and location of monuments on a perspective axis. In fact also (Jallon et al., 2017) state that the Haussman urban fabric has one of the highest levels of built density, slightly 2/3 of the ground has been built upon.



Figure 5-45 – Ile de la Cite before the Haussmann Plan (1855)¹⁰⁶

Le Corbusier was undoubtedly the greatest theoretician of the new vision, who proposed provocative projects, such as the Plan Voisin to replace the centre of Paris with a modern

¹⁰⁶ Source: <https://www.paris-unplugged.fr/1855-lile-de-la-cite-avant-haussmann/>

grid of high-rise architecture (Le Corbusier, 1935).

Inscription as World Heritage Property

Paris was inscribed in 1991 in the World Heritage list based on criteria: (i), (ii), and (iv). It is an outstanding urban architectural ensemble, united by a grandiose river landscape, that reflects the evolution and development of Paris and illustrates most of the styles, decorative arts and building methods employed in the city over nearly eight centuries of its history from early medieval times to the mid-20th century. Within its boundaries are architectural and urban masterpieces built either alongside the Seine River or overlooking it, and which can be seen from the river, as well as examples of the 17th through 18th and 19th century urban planning.(ICOMOS, 2024)

The Buffer Zone

Initially the world heritage core had no buffer zone. A buffer zone about 6 times larger than the size of the core zone was approved in 2024 by the World Heritage Committee in order to protect the "visual field" of the river based on a study of the history and topography of the landscape, with consideration of the views to and from the Seine and using one of the 'growth rings' of the wider city. The modification of boundaries adding an extensive buffer zone was requested by the state aiming to add to the existing ensemble architectural and urban monuments that were missing in the original nomination or for which adequate protection was not ensured at that time. Several structures dating from the Middle Ages to the 21st Century located on both river banks were among the elements to be included.

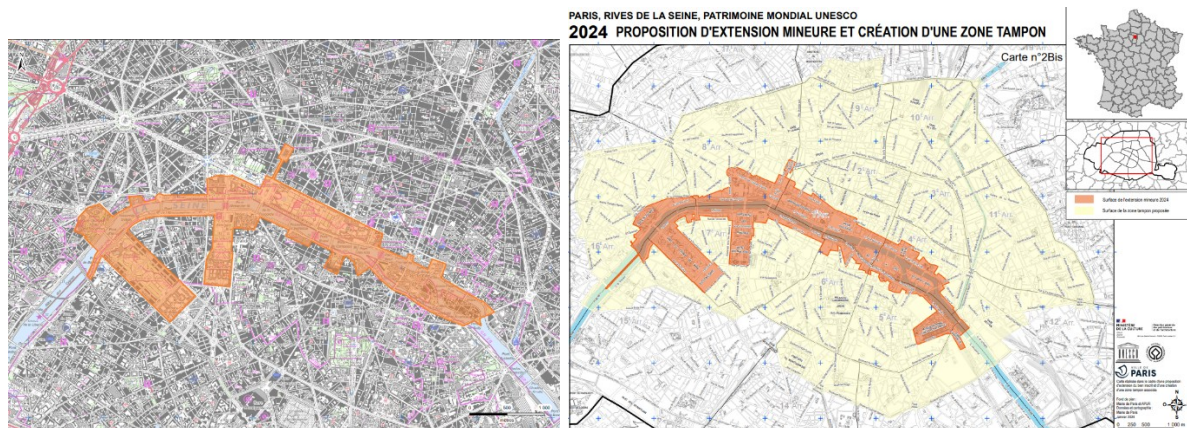


Figure 5-46 – (Left) Map of the Historic Centre of Paris (1991), (right) Revised Map of the Historic Centre and Buffer zone of Paris (2024), Source: (World Heritage Centre, 1991)

Analysis based on Regulatory Indicators

<i>R-U.1 Development Pressure Challenges</i>	The existing and potential threats to the OUV within the inscribed property and the Buffer zone are addressed through the revised Local Urban Plan (PLU) of Paris, which imposes height restrictions on new developments, and stipulates requirements for the transformation, restoration and enhancement of the existing structures.
<i>R-U.2 Existence of a management plan</i>	No management plan for the property was available at the time of proposal and no special management measures were set out for the proposed buffer zone
<i>R-U.3 Regulatory limits / control of urban tissue</i>	The control of the urban tissue is regulated via the spatial tool of PLU including restrictions on height and/or requirements for adaptive reuse of buildings and their restoration. It further regulates other aspects of the built environment and the landscape, including preservation and valorisation of vistas of significance for the important historic urban planning projects; preservation of the urban fabric characteristic of each neighbourhood in Paris through the Sustainable Development and Planning Project (PADD); safeguarding of the architectural and cultural qualities of the urban heritage while adapting it to contemporary uses and norms. The buildings under the special protection of the City of Paris (Protections « Ville de Paris » – PVP) cannot be demolished, unless for security reasons, and need to be restored and enhanced. The PLU also restricts tourist rentals and puts in place measures to streamline visitor access to the central area of the city. (ICOMOS, 2024)
<i>R-U.4. Approach towards new constructions proposals</i>	Paris utilizes a strict "Height Ceiling" policy within the historic core (typically 25–37 meters). Any new construction within the buffer zone must: - Maintain the Haussmann scale (6–7 stories). - Ensure that materials harmonize with the monochromatic "gray and beige" palette of the city. - Undergo a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) in order to assess impact on visual perspectives.

<i>R-U.5 Governance</i>	Most of the buildings are owned and managed by the State directly or through its public entities including the river and its banks. Haropa Port Paris, together with the City of Paris, and partly with Voies Navigables de France (VNF), manages the quays, the body of water, and the associated spaces. The regulations in place (through the Heritage Code, Urban Planning Code, Environmental Code) ensure that the conservation, restoration and valorisation of the property will be done under the control of the State.
<i>R-U.6 Community Engagement</i>	Highly active through "Neighborhood Councils" (<i>Conseils de quartier</i>) and associations like Paris Historique. Public debates on the "pedestrianization of the Banks" have been central to local governance in the last decade.
<i>R-A.1 Independent Assessments (ex. UNESCO / ICOMOS etc.)</i>	Yes, The modifications of the boundaries were undertaken Evaluation Reports of Advisory bodies following request for modification of the boundary proposing the addition of a buffer zone.

Urban Morphology

Jallon et al. (2017) state that although in the Haussmann plan, the blocks vary in morphology they are similar in typology since they are constituted by the same typological elements. They are considered as an assembly of units, where a block can be considered a single building or be divided into interdepending parts almost as a reversible process. Parisian Blocks are very heterogeneous in size and this is a result of the co-existence of the “old” and the “new” as well as due to the priority given to the connectivity in the plan. As a result, Parisian blocks whose form is the result of either the creation or the modification of the surrounding roads is called a “Haussmann” block.

Architectural Diversity

The buildings were icons of the Haussman Plan; however their type “rental property” was already present in the 18th century. The transformation undertaken by Haussman was that the lots were no longer made for one family but rather designed for many renters of different social backgrounds, making it a forerunner of a collective housing. Facades are a grid behind which all functions are regulated. The structural system is very clear, load bearing walls that

support the floor and the core of the bracing system. Most of the buildings are very thin element which combined with a generous height of the floor provides air, light and ventilation. The facades in cut stone made everyone believe that behind them everything was the same, however what was behind them (wood and plaster) was used based on a strict economic model that allowed differentiation of cost based on the quality of construction and space. Three classes of buildings were identified, as seen in Figure 5-49.

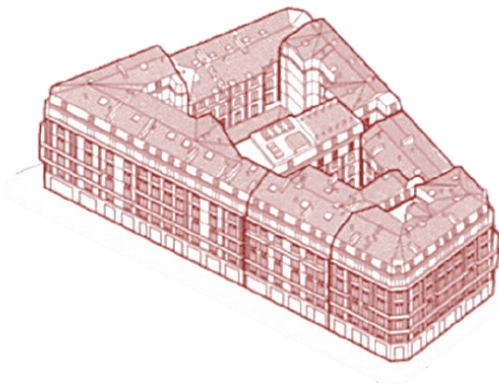


Figure 5-47 - Continuous façade block (their size varies between 140-1289 m). Source: (Jallon et al., 2017)

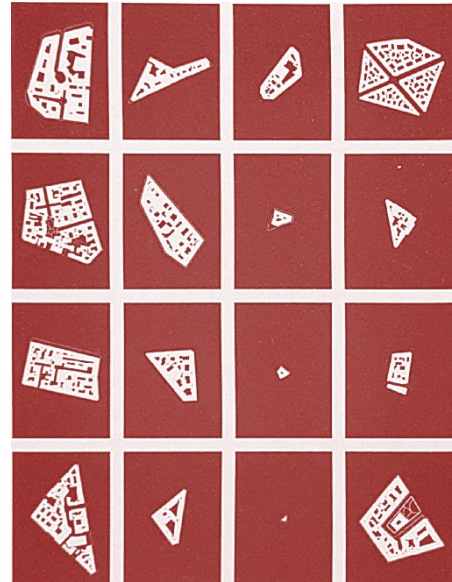
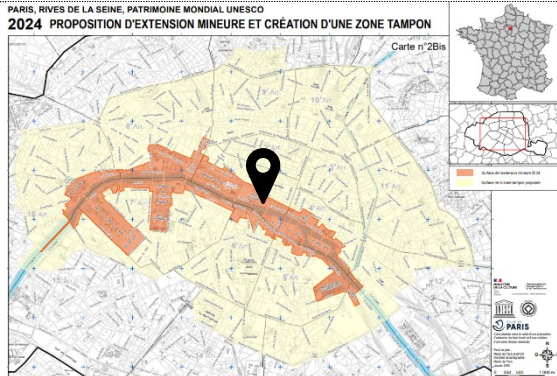


Figure 5-48 - Typical Parisian blocks. Source: (Jallon et al., 2017)



Figure 5-49 – (from left to right) Building class 1, class 2 and class 3

Analysis of Design Indicators

Name of the project	1. Samaritaine Redevelopment
Year launched	2011 - 2021
Location	In the Historic centre. 
Compliance with Heritage status	La Samaritaine was founded in 1870, an icon of Paris, as it relates to the emergence of a architectural typology - the department store. Starting as a small shop it expanded to occupy a series of buildings. The building displayed elements of Art Nouveau and Art Deco. Due to its being not in use the building and the overall area suffered neglect. The renovation project proposed a restructuring of the façade using glass material. It was not considered compliant with the heritage status and was subject to numerous complaints due to the transformation of a specific type of architecture and of a Haussmann block.  View of the Samaritane before and after the renovation by Sanaa architects
Compliance to spatial planning normative	Since it is a renovation of an existing building it does not include changes in the spatial development of the building. It proposes a renovation of the façade of the Haussmann block which as seen in the morphological analysis and in the Nomination file (1991) is one of the attributes directly linked with the OUV.
Public Discussion	A strong opposition resulted from several heritage groups and the project design was halted several times due to court rulings. Yet it managed to be completed.
D-U.1. Urban	It does not propose a change in the morphology rather than architectural features of the façade proposing a glass façade. It has had an impact on the

morphology	revitalization of the whole neighbourhood though.
D-U.2. City views and vistas	It has an impact on transforming the street scape
D-A.1. Specific architectural features	The project included restoration of the art nouveau elements, the wall paintings and the iconic staircase in the interior. 

Conclusions on Paris World Heritage site

The buffer zone was deemed necessary after about 20 years after the nomination as World Heritage.

In the case of Paris it is important to notice that the buffer zone is not considered as a merely protective tool (static area). It is proposed to include a number of undervalorized monuments and to complement the values of the historic core through adding a layer of protection of view corridors and urban vistas in the wider context encompassed by the buffer zone. The buffer zone was not conceived as a geometrical area rather it was proposed based on a study on history of evolution and topography of the city.

Even before the adding of the buffer zone, it is noted that many areas were subject to control of the urban tissue through tools of spatial planning such as the local urban plan, master plans and urban vistas studies.

The fact that most of the buildings are owned and managed by the state is interesting as it aids to the overall and coherent control on the territory.

The active engagement of the civil society as well as the importance of the independent studies such as the ICOMOS technical reports are important tools that are crucial for transparency and professionalism.

5.2.4 Edinburgh, Scotland

Edinburgh has been the Scottish capital since the 15th century. It has two distinct areas: the Old Town, dominated by a medieval fortress; and the neoclassical New Town, whose development from the 18th century onwards had a far-reaching influence on European urban planning. The harmonious juxtaposition of these two contrasting historic areas, each with many important buildings, is what gives the city its unique character.



Figure 5-50 – View of the city of Edinburgh, world heritage site.

Inscription

Edinburgh was inscribed as a World Heritage Property in 1995 based on Criteria: (ii) and (iv). The inscription recognised the striking contrast and quality in architecture between the medieval Old Town and the Georgian New Town. The medieval Old Town has retained its distinctive pattern of narrow passageways, known as closes and wynds. The New Towns, first designed in 1767, is the largest and best preserved example of Georgian town planning in the United Kingdom (City Council, 2017-2022).

The Buffer Zone

Historically, Edinburgh operated without a formally declared UNESCO buffer zone, relying instead on a "visual envelope" and local conservation area protections. Following UNESCO requests (notably in 2009 and 2011), the city utilizes a "Skyline Study" and specific "Key Views" guidelines to protect the setting. While the World Heritage site itself is 4.5 km², the area of visual influence, where tall buildings are regulated to protect vistas of the Castle and Arthur's Seat, covers a much broader metropolitan area.

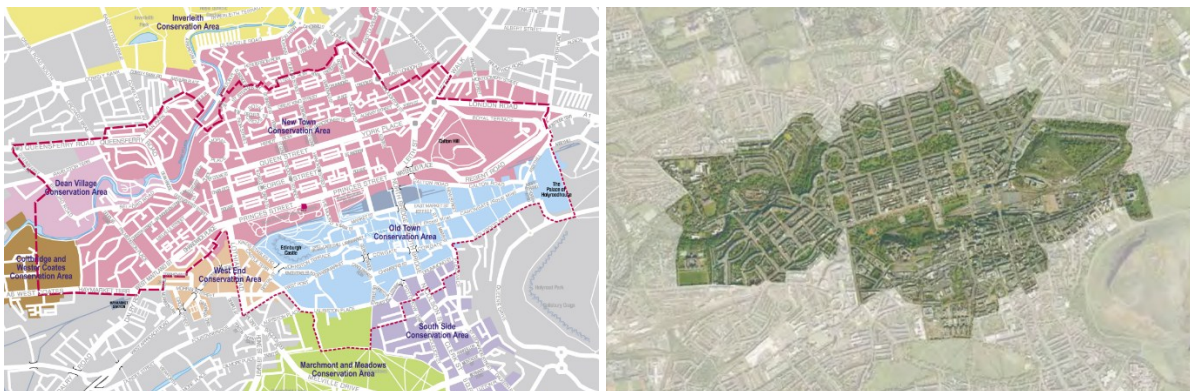


Figure 5-51 - (Left) Map of the Historic Centre of Edinburgh specifying the conservation areas (2005), (right) Clarified Map of Historic Centre of Edinburgh (2024), Source: (World Heritage Centre, 1995)

Analysis based on Regulatory Indicators

<i>R-U.1 Development Pressure Challenges</i>	Pressure for high-density office and hotel space that could "pierce" the historic skyline.
<i>R-U.2 Existence of a management plan</i>	Yes 2017-2022 and it is integrated with the local Plan as well as it is consulted for decisions in urban planning matters. The management of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site is considered as an example of best practice internationally.
<i>R-U.3 Regulatory limits / control of urban tissue</i>	Local policies on protecting the property are contained within The City of Edinburgh Local Plan and cite the Management Plan for decisions on planning matters. The Local Development Plan (LDP) sets out policies and proposals to guide development. It was adopted in November 2016 and replaces the Edinburgh City Local Plan and Rural West Edinburgh Local Plan. The policies in the LDP are used to determine planning applications. The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site is protected by Policy Env 1 in the LDP. The immediate setting of the property is protected by a Skyline Policy that has been adopted by City of Edinburgh Council. This defines key views across the city with the aim of providing planning control that will safeguard them. This control of tall buildings that might impact on the city centre provides appropriate protection to the setting of the property, safeguarding its world-renown silhouette and views from the property outwards to crucial topographic features. The Skyline policy combined with existing listed buildings and conservation area designations provides a comprehensive tool to protect the OUV of the property. This method of protection is being monitored on an ongoing basis.
<i>R-U.4.Approach towards new constructions proposals</i>	Edinburgh employs the "Key Views" Policy. Any proposal that falls within one of the 27 protected "vistas" must undergo a rigorous visual impact assessment. The approach is not to ban modern architecture but to ensure material harmony (typically using <i>Craighleith</i> sandstone or high-quality equivalents) and volumetric modesty.

	The City of Edinburgh gives priority to the maintenance of historic buildings providing grants to the owners to undertake periodic maintenance works.
<i>R-U.5 Governance</i>	Management partners, (City Council, 2017-2022): The City of Edinburgh Council is the Planning Authority that implements the planning system in the city. It is responsible for providing political leadership and governance for a range of services across the city. Historic Environment Scotland is a non-departmental public body in charge for the investigation, care for and promotion of Scotland's historic environment. Its board is appointed by Scottish Ministers. Edinburgh World Heritage is an independent charity formally charged by the City of Edinburgh Council and Historic Environment Scotland with facilitating the work of the World Heritage Steering Group and overseeing the implementation of the Management Plan since 1999.
<i>R-U.6 Community Engagement</i>	Management of the property is indirectly influenced by many organisations, communities and interest groups. The Management Plan was the subject of detailed stakeholder engagement, the results of which informed its vision, objectives and actions.
<i>R-A.1 Independent Assessments (ex. UNESCO / ICOMOS etc.)</i>	ICOMOS has conducted several "Reactive Monitoring Missions" (2008). While generally positive about the city's conservation standards, they have criticized specific large-scale redevelopments for being "out of scale" with the medieval grain of the Old Town. They urge the formalization of a buffer zone that aligns with national planning law.

Conclusions for Edinburgh:

Edinburgh was selected as an example of historic centre that does not have a formal buffer zone delineated. It is an unique case where both units in charge for urban planning and the units in charge for heritage preservation function as established management partners. A high level of citizen participation is evidenced which is a key tool for both control and promotion. Although the city adopts the historic urban approach including a plan for the city

scape character and view corridors, still the advisory bodies of UNESCO namely ICOMOS continue to request for the addition of a buffer zone. The request is based on the threats

5.2.5 Warsaw, Poland

The Historic centre of Warsaw was inscribed to the World Heritage List in 1980, based on criteria (ii) and (vi). Its nomination is based on its unique character of a near-total reconstruction of a span of history covering the 13th to the 20th century. Unlike other sites, its OUV is rooted in the authenticity of the reconstruction process itself, a five-year process after the destruction of the city during the uprising of the Nazi troops in 1944. It is a symbol of the Polish nation's determination to rebuild its heritage after the planned destruction during WWII. The Historic centre representing the medieval Old Town enclosed within its fortification wall. (World Heritage Centre, 1980b)



Figure 5-52 – The old town of Warsaw before (1935) and after the war destruction (1947), Source

– The old town of Warsaw before (1935) and after the war destruction (1947), Source (City of Warsaw, 2013)

The Buffer Zone

The property was initially nominated as world heritage site without a buffer zone. It became a need due to the fact that the surroundings of the historic centre were threatened by development projects including high rise buildings. A first proposal of buffer zone was sent to UNESCO in 2013, however it was referred back to the State Party because the proposed

buffer zone was not protected or regulated as a whole. It was expanded in 2014 to provide better protection for the city's panoramic views, ensuring that the historic silhouette remains the dominant feature of the skyline. It now comprises an area that outsizes the core zone by 25 times,¹⁰⁷ see Figure 5-53.

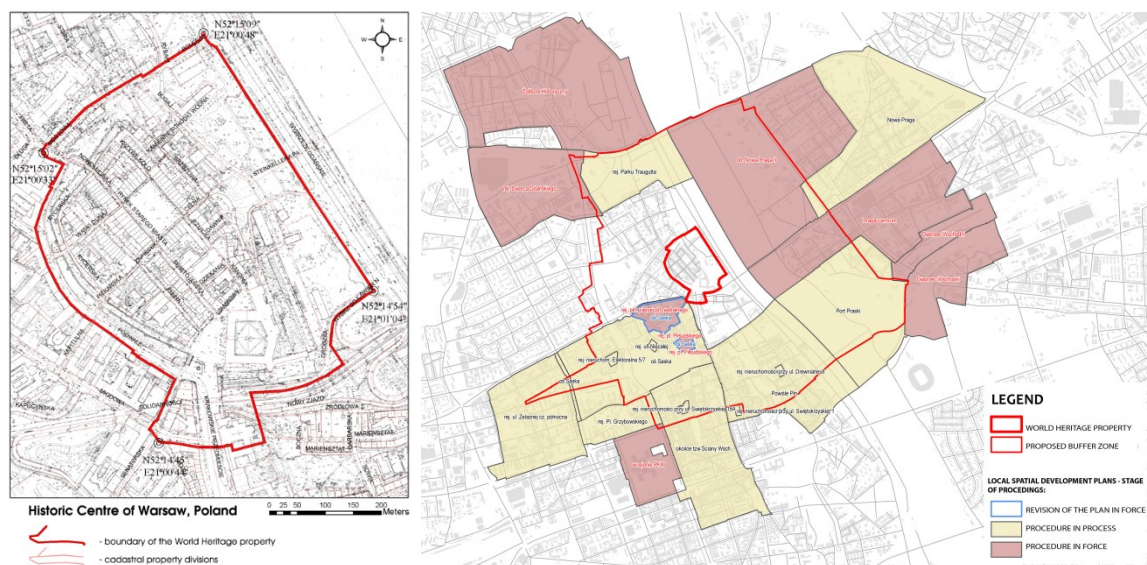


Figure 5-53 - (Left) Map of the Historic Centre of Warsaw (1980), (right) Modification of the Map of Historic Centre of Warsaw, including proposal for buffer zone with clarification on areas that have spatial plan (2014), Source: (World Heritage Centre, 1980b)

Analysis based on Regulatory Indicators

<i>R-U.1 Development Pressure Challenges</i>	A development project approved in 2013, within the buffer zone, yet without reference to the World Heritage Centre triggered a great concern in relation to its impact on the OUV.
<i>R-U.2 Existence of a management plan</i>	Yes, (2013)
<i>R-U.3 Regulatory limits / control of urban tissue</i>	ICOMOS recommended several control tools to be incorporated in all development plans covering the proposed buffer zone. These control mechanisms included the limitation of height of new buildings as well as defined scale, materials, techniques and colours.

¹⁰⁷ Area of the core zone: 26 ha, Area of the buffer zone: 667 ha, Source: the Nomination dossier, UNESCO

<i>R-U.4. Approach towards new constructions proposals</i>	Regarding new constructions, ICOMOS recommended that a study on views to and from the WH property should be carefully studied and left open. The role of a historic preservation officer in the planning permission decision for building interventions should be strengthened. (ICOMOS, 2014) New projects within the property or its buffer zone must adhere to the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach. The primary constraint is Visual Impact: no new structure should compete with the Royal Castle or the Sigismund's Column. HIAs (Heritage Impact Assessments) are mandatory for large-scale interventions to ensure they do not disrupt the "historical continuity" of the site.
<i>R-U.5 Governance</i>	Upon request of the advisory bodies of UNESCO, the whole area of the 2014 buffer zone is covered with spatial planning provisions.
<i>R-U.6 Community Engagement</i>	n/a
<i>R-A.1 Independent Assessments (ex. UNESCO / ICOMOS etc.)</i>	Yes, Advisory bodies evaluation reports have been prepared by ICOMOS upon proposal of a buffer zone.

Values and Attributes

The documentation of the destruction as well as documentation of the total reconstruction is one of the main values that shapes the OUV. Total Reconstruction: The meticulously recreated Old Town Market Place, city walls, and Royal Castle based on Canaletto's paintings and architectural fragments. The process of reconstruction was an experiment that contributed to significant changes in the doctrine of conservation particularly in relation to the interventions in urban sites (City of Warsaw, 2013).

Conclusions on Warsaw

The city of Warsaw is in charge for both the preservation of historic values and the spatial and territorial planning. One specificity of Warsaw is the prerequisite that the whole area of the buffer zone should be covered with spatial plans. The management plan of the World Heritage site (2013) includes a separate chapter on buffer zone. There is a requirement for the new interventions to undertake a HIA.

5.2.6 Dubrovnik, Croatia

The Old City of Dubrovnik was among the earliest historic cities to be inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1979. Its inscription was justified under criteria (i), (iii), and (iv)¹⁰⁸, recognizing it as an exceptional example of a planned urban ensemble from the 13th century onwards. The original medieval urban structure remains clearly legible today. Despite successive natural disasters, stylistic transformations, and social changes that have shaped the city over time, the historic layout has been preserved and continues to integrate later interventions in a harmonious manner. Although most of Dubrovnik's street network still follows the statutory provisions established in the 13th century, only a limited number of vernacular houses and palaces retain earlier Romanesque, Gothic, and Renaissance characteristics in their exterior appearance and spatial organization. This scarcity is largely the result of repeated natural disasters, particularly earthquakes, that have affected the city at various moments throughout its history.



Figure 5-54 – View of the Old city of Dubrovnik. Source: *Unesco, authored by Bandarin F. (2005)*¹⁰⁹

While at the time of inscription, the World Heritage Site mainly consisted only of the 13th century fortified core of the *Old City*, it was expanded in 1994 to include areas outside the city walls, considered integral components of the monumental integrity of Dubrovnik (see

¹⁰⁸ Criterion (i) as “a masterpiece of human creative genius: The historical urban and architectural complex of Dubrovnik has retained to date the essential elements of the medieval structure of a fortified City: the ramparts, the lay-out of the streets and squares, impressive public edifices and a great many private dwellings. Regardless of any considerations on the particular artistic value of the edifices, here we find primarily a complex of outstanding value which demonstrates the will to create, develop and embellish an urban landscape as if it were a work of art.” Criterion (III) bearing “a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared”. Criterion (IV) representing “an outstanding example of a type of architectural ensemble which illustrates significant stages in human history.”

¹⁰⁹ Accessed (January 2026) in url: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/95/gallery/&maxrows=35>

Figure 5-56). Necessity for the extension and further protection of the surroundings emerged due to damage faced during the independence war (1991-1998) when the site was placed in the Danger List.

Buffer Zone

A smaller buffer zone was initially established in 1994, (see Figure 5-56), and it was expanded in 2018 following 2015 UNESCO/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring Mission, which identified a need for enhanced spatial and visual protection in order to better present the property in its wider setting, including the immediate and important areas that are functionally important to the property, and to effectively provide an added layer of protection to the property from the growing pressures of development and tourism (ICOMOS, 2018). Designed to control the city's image from both the mainland and sea, it encompasses several historic districts and natural areas in the surroundings the historic core. (see Figure 5-57).



Figure 5-55 – Historic Core, included in WH List in 1979, Source:(University of Zagreb, 2021)

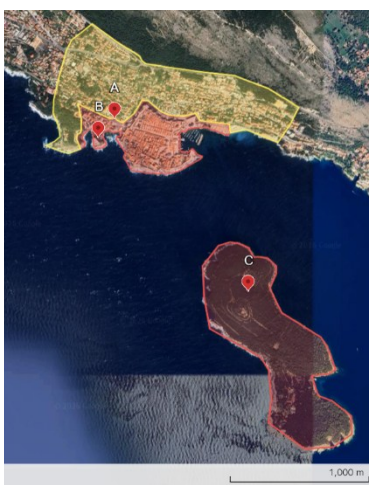


Figure 5-56 – 1994 Extension of the Historic Core and designation of a Buffer zone (letters A-C show historic districts included in the WH Core).¹¹⁰ Source:(University of Zagreb, 2021)



Figure 5-57 – 2018 Extension of the Buffer zone based on recommendation of the 2015 ICOMOS Mission Report. Numbers 1-6 show historic districts included in the buffer zone.¹¹¹ Source:(University of Zagreb, 2021)

¹¹⁰ Letters A-C in the figure, show location of areas included in the World Heritage core as the (A) Pile suburb, (B) Lovrijenac Fortress (15th-16th cent.), and (C) Lokrum Island (located 500 m from the coast in its South East) holding important religious complexes such as Benedictine (11th cent), Gothic-Renaissance complexes (15th cent) as well as a 19th century Fort. Based on the technical report of ICOMOS (these areas mark the point where a major road entered the Roman town that preceded the medieval Dubrovnik, as well as medieval industrial zones (Pile suburb, a planned development of 15th cent.).

¹¹¹ Numbers 1-6 in the figure show location of the historic Districts of (1) *Gruž*, (2) *Boninovo*, (3) *Kono*, (4) *Ploče*, and (5) *Sveti Jakov*, as well as the peak zone and (6) southern slopes of *Mount Srđ*,

According to the State Party, the proposed extended buffer zone is defined partly by administrative boundaries of the city, and partly following the topography of the terrain in order to preserve important views. The State Party holds that the enlarged buffer zone aims at incorporating surrounding urban and landscape areas, embracing all the inseparable areas attached to the old town, namely: east and west suburbs, the slopes of Mount Srđ and waters in front of the old harbour and the island of Lokrum. The extension of the existing buffer zone is justified by the State Party on the grounds that adding areas of urban and natural landscape as inseparable integral areas will enhance the Outstanding Universal Value of the Old City of Dubrovnik.

All of these areas of the proposed new buffer zone complement and highlight the historical functional urban identity and integrity of the property (University of Zagreb, 2021).

Values and Attributes

The Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of Old City of Dubrovnik is defined by its remarkably well-preserved medieval planned urban structure, characterized by an orthogonal street grid and the monumental 13th-century city walls that enclose the historic core.

Urban morphology

Dubrovnik retains the essential elements of a medieval fortified town, including its ramparts, the layout of streets and squares, and a coherent complex of public buildings and private dwellings. Its unity largely derives from extensive town-planning interventions carried out in the 13th century, which shaped the structure of the town as the monumental centre of a territory governed by the medieval Republic.

The urban structure of the city, with its predominantly orthogonal street grid, followed strict norms regarding street width, the surface area of residential and public spaces, construction materials for buildings, streets and squares, and municipal infrastructure. The Old City's main street, *Placa* (marked in yellow in Figure 5-58), forms the east-west axis of the city and is the main focus of public life. Placa is bordered by residential buildings, while *Luža* (marked in purple in Figure 5-58) and its southern extension consist of administrative, commercial, sacral and municipal buildings.

City views and vistas

The fortified walls enclosing the town, together with their large defensive towers, define the overall perception of the urban complex. These fortifications surround an almost entirely preserved historic townscape and reinforce the visual unity between the existing edifices and the wider urban ensemble.

Specific architectural features

The town includes impressive public edifices and numerous private dwellings characterized by a deliberate tendency toward an imposing and monumental style. The defensive structures, particularly the towers, demonstrate military architecture from the 13th to the 17th centuries. Even utilitarian buildings display aesthetic qualities, evident in the stonework and formal design, as illustrated by the Minčeta Tower built by Michelozzo Michelozzi and Georgius Dalmaticus.

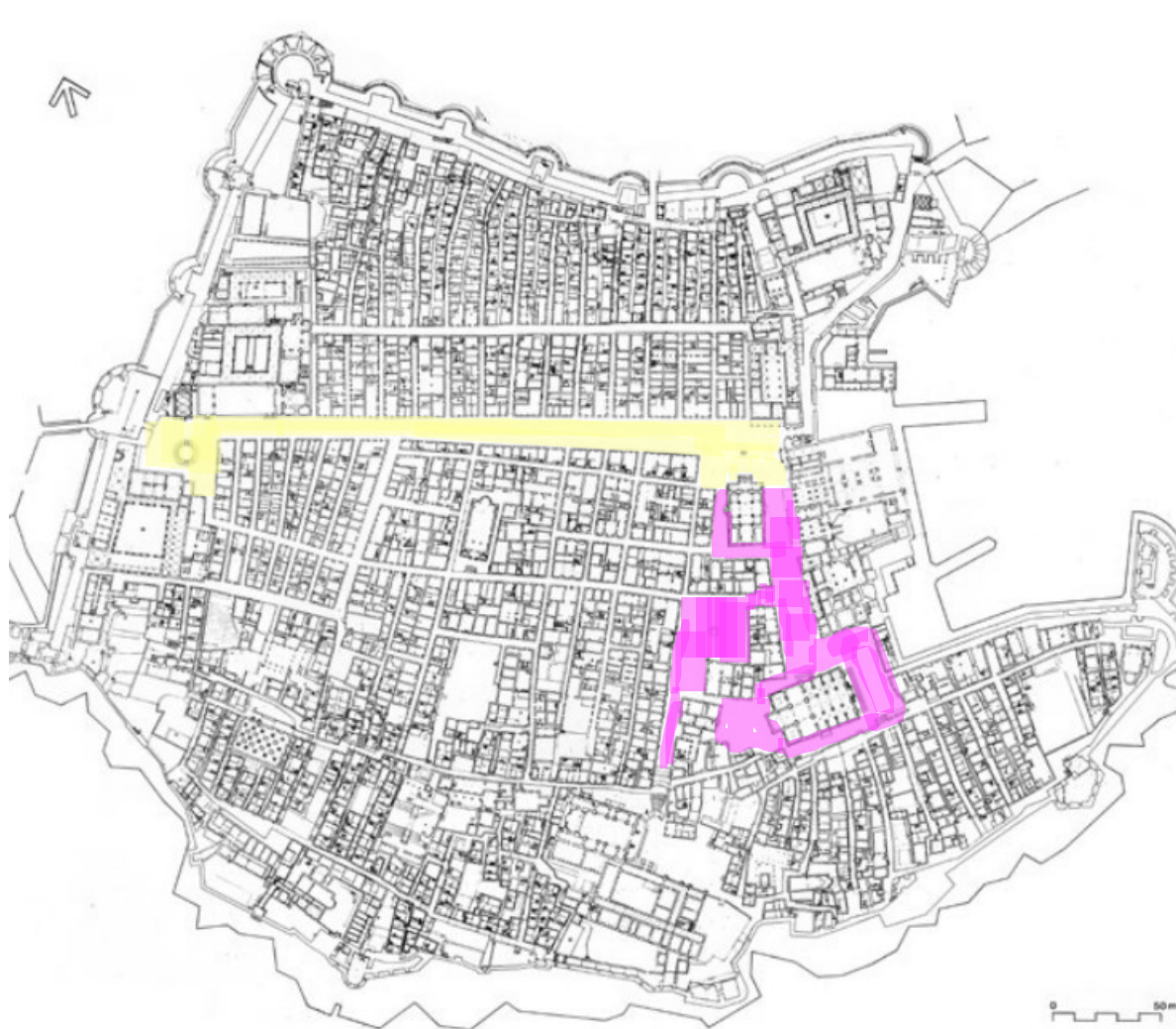


Figure 5-58 – Dubrovnik, Ground Floor-Level layout of the city. Source of base map: Institute of Art History, Ivan Tenšek et al¹¹² The East-West and South axes are highlighted by the author.

¹¹² University of Zagreb, F. o. A. (2021). *Management plan of the UNESCO Heritage Site of the old city of Dubrovnik*. Institute for the restoration of Dubrovnik Retrieved from https://zod.hr/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/PLAN_UPRAVLJANJA_ENG_za-web1.pdf

Link to key historic phases of city development (building styles/genres)

The urban structure preserves nearly all stages of the town's development over six centuries. The preserved documentation and laws regulating the town's status demonstrate that the urban planning concepts of its builders were largely implemented, reflecting the historical development of the medieval Republic and its efforts to create a monumental urban centre while maintaining its independence until the early 19th century (World Heritage Centre, 1979).

<i>R-U.1</i> <i>Development Pressure Challenges</i>	The pressures faced by Dubrovnik primarily stem from excessive tourism development and gentrification. Over 4/5 of Dubrovnik's economy is apparently tourist dependent. Revenues from tourism have been used to subsidise the City's income. Main challenges include depopulation, tourism overload, infrastructure strain and construction pressure due to the intense demand for new residential and tourist capacities in the areas surrounding the WHS.
<i>R-U.2 Existence of a management plan</i>	Yes, Due to requests from the advisory bodies of Unesco, a management plan is in force since 2021
<i>R-U.3 Regulatory limits / control of urban tissue</i>	Urban tissue is controlled via the Act on the Protection and Preservation of Cultural Property Zone A (Complete Protection) strictly prohibits foreign or incompatible structures and requires minimal physical interventions Specific regulations include: - Mandatory use of traditional materials (stone, wood) and details like "kupe kanalice" (traditional tiles) - Prohibitions on merging smaller units into larger ones or adding balconies and roof terraces - Underground installation of all new infrastructure - Strict color codes for window coverings (persijane)
<i>R-U.4.</i> <i>Approach towards new constructions</i>	The area of Dubrovnik and the former Republic of Ragusa has a long spatial planning history, from a medieval legislative system to the

<i>proposals</i>	present-day developed national planning policy. The Act on the Protection and Preservation of Cultural Property stipulates that a spatial planning document may not be adopted without the prior consent of the competent authority, confirming that it complies with the conservation database or the established system of protection measures. However, the Act on Physical Planning does not foresee the possibility of consent being issued by the competent Ministry of Culture and Media. The Management Plan emphasizes a ban on new construction in unbuilt areas on the slopes of Mount Srđ and the preservation of green mantle and cultural landscapes. For new projects in the buffer zone and setting, a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) must be carried out according to ICOMOS guidelines to ensure they do not negatively affect the site's spatial or visual integrity. The Spatial Plan of the Dubrovnik-Neretva County established the status of the WHS setting in 2019, thereby defining a wider spatial framework for institutional control of interventions in the sensitive surrounding of the WHS. The setting corresponds to the HUL of Dubrovnik and presents an area in which changes or development could impact the OUV of the WHS (development projects, environmental changes, etc.) (University of Zagreb, 2021)
<i>R-U.5 Governance</i>	The institutional framework for the protection and preservation of the WHS consists of the Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia, the City of Dubrovnik, the Conservation Department in Dubrovnik, the Institute for Physical Planning of the Dubrovnik-Neretva County and the Institute for the Restoration of Dubrovnik (ZOD). This Management Plan demands the strengthening of the institutional framework by building the capacities of ZOD and other stakeholders. The management structure is coordinated by the Institute for the Restoration of Dubrovnik (ZOD). It includes a Management Committee divided into: Management Board: Responsible for high-level implementation monitoring (5 members,

	including the Minister of Culture and the Mayor) Executive Board: Handles direct application and stakeholder coordination (13 members, including city district representatives)
R-U.6 Community Engagement	The plan was developed through a comprehensive participatory process involving citizens, associations, and NGOs. City District Councils (Grad, Ploče-Iza Grada, Pile-Kono) serve as institutional forms for residents to influence decision-making.
R-A.1 <i>Independent Assessments eg..UNESCO / ICOMOS etc.</i>	Yes (1998, 2015) The 2015 UNESCO/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring Mission has been a primary driver for recent management changes Their reports highlighted: Concerns regarding the visual impact of air conditioning units, billboards, and satellite dishes on historic facades. Recommendations to expand the buffer zone to include the southwestern slopes of Mount Srđ.



The buffer zone and the WHS setting can be divided into three characteristic areas: Mount Srđ, the urban area, the coast and the sea zone.

Name of the project	1. Sports-recreational centre with a golf course and tourist resorts Bosanka North and Bosanka South” on the plateau of the hill of Srđ above Dubrovnik This scheme for a golf resort is planned for the plateau on Mount Srđ which lies to the east of the property. The plateau forms part of the property’s hinterland and is a historically significant landscape, with the remains of a fortification system. The surface of the plateau is a mixture of largely untouched natural vegetation and rock exposures.
---------------------	--

	The plateau is not visible from the property except at its southern end around the village of Bosanka. At this point the plateau merges with the steep, westward facing, scarp of Mount Srđ. This partially wooded scarp rises directly behind the city and provides a dramatic backdrop to the property. On the actual crest of Mount Srđ the Napoleonic Fort Imperial is situated directly overlooking the inscribed property. The golf resort project has been in preparation since 2005. It is aimed at an international clientele, and its construction is part of the city's objective of widening its tourist and sports facilities. From the outset local NGOs expressed major concern over the impact of this proposal and their representations to the World Heritage Centre contributed to the decision to undertake the reactive monitoring, Mission.
Year launched	2014
Location	Wider surroundings (out of the core zone and out of the buffer area)
Compliance with Heritage status	The World Heritage Committee (2014)¹¹³ requested the State Party to halt any processes or works and to provide the project documentation and the respective Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) before any development works started and any final decision had been taken. The main issue raised was that the project's large scale could have a major negative impact by erasing the historic distinction between Dubrovnik's medieval urban complex and its surrounding landscape and rural setting, thereby threatening the property's Outstanding Universal Value (ICOMOS, 2018). Since the analytical documentation provided by the State Party did not assess the proposed development in terms of its potential impacts on the attributes that sustain the OUV, the WH Committee requested the state party to invite a reactive monitoring mission to evaluate the impact and suggest options to minimize it. The 2015 Mission recommended the extension of the buffer zone to include the west facing slopes of Mount Srđ, the sea area around the Island of Lokrum and the fortress landscape of the Srđ plateau Decision 41 COM 8B.41¹¹⁴ Refers the proposed minor modification to the boundaries of Old City of Dubrovnik, Croatia, back to the State Party in order to allow it to: a) Explanation of the methodological framework and rationale for the delineation of the buffer zone, also through cartographic, graphic and photographic documentation, in particular with regard to the protection of the relevant visual links of the inscribed property with the surrounding setting. See the flow chart of the process undergone by the project for its adoption in Figure 5-59.
Compliance to spatial	The State Party informed that this project was going to be approved and that the construction of apartments and golf courses was going to

¹¹³ Decision 38 COM 7B.25, Doha, 2014,

¹¹⁴ <https://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/6913>

planning normative	start. It noted that the Dubrovnik Conservation Department had determined that, after some revisions to the zones and the volumes of the centre, the planned development aligned with previously issued conservation guidelines. The Urban Development plan for the City of Dubrovnik was also revised and adopted by the Dubrovnik City Council on 17 August 2013. The whole area of the inscribed property together with the proposed buffer zone is currently regulated by spatial planning documents including the General Urban Plan of the City of Dubrovnik. This includes requirements for spatial development, improvement and protection of natural, cultural and historical values. The State Party also advises that after adoption of the proposed buffer zone, a new study document based on the HIA methodology will be drafted and the urban planning documents will be revised to include provisions for the better preservation of the property. (report advisory 2018) The State Party indicates that protection measures will be recommended in all physical planning documents for the proposed buffer zone. HIA will be obligatory for all significant development that could impact on Outstanding Universal Value. The process of preparing the Management Plan for the property started in 2014 and the Institute for Restoration of Dubrovnik has been appointed to co-ordinate the elaboration of the Management Plan. A draft Management Plan should be available by the end of 2018. ICOMOS believes that the prompt finalisation, approval and effective implementation of the Management Plan for the property is of utmost importance as a means of ensuring that the buffer zone is able to provide effective protection for the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.
Public Discussion	Concerns about this project have been voiced by local NGOs, including the Association of Dubrovnik architects; Dubrovnik branch of Association of art historians of Croatia; Initiative Srđ je naš (Srđ is ours). The NGOs criticise the lack of transparency and stakeholder involvement in the decisionmaking process. The NGOs also challenged the legality of the planning process. This challenge has been upheld, and the NGOs are claiming more irregularities in the decision-making process which will be the subject of a further legal challenge.
D-U.2. City views and vistas	The proposed recreational centre covers an area of protected forest of some 359 ha on the plateau of Mount Srđ and Bosanka, situated directly above the City of Dubrovnik. The proposal included the construction of two golf courses, a sports centre, two hotels, 240 villas, 408 apartments, an amphitheatre, equestrian club, parks, promenades and other facilities. Some of the villas are be constructed at the edge of the escarpment giving them views over the Old City.

	The visual integrity of the City of Dubrovnik will not be disturbed by the planned development on the plateau of Srđ, since several visual exposure studies have been developed while drafting the Urban Plan and corrections to the Plan were made accordingly
--	--

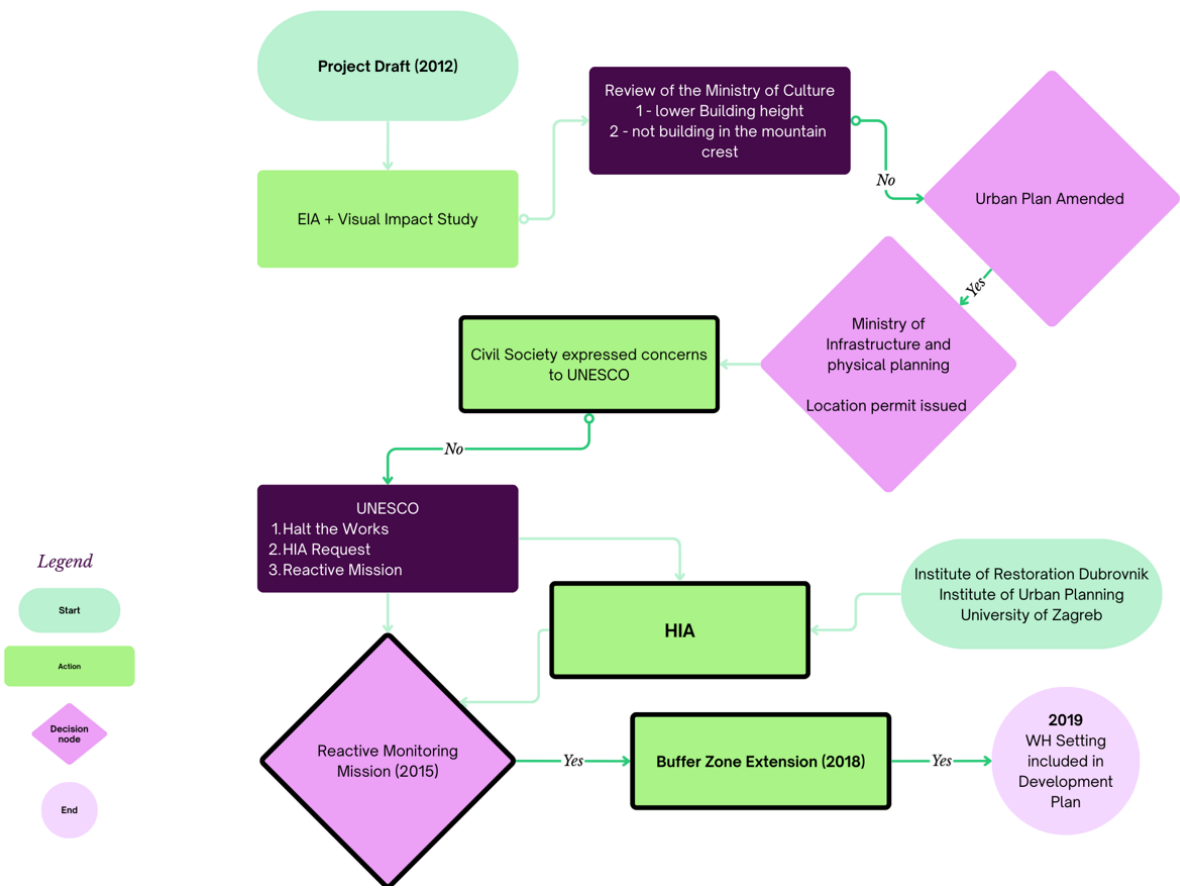


Figure 5-59 – Flow Chart of process of approval of the project 1. Sports-recreational centre with a golf course and tourist resorts Bosanka North and Bosanka South”

Name of the project	2. Regulation of the Cruise Ship tourism Dubrovnik is the second most popular cruise destination in the Mediterranean after Venice. Approximately one million cruise tourists visit the property annually. The cruising season is short: 90% of the visits taking place May-October. Although these visitors represent only a small proportion of total visitors (2.5% in 2013), they have a disproportionate impact on the World Heritage property due to their concentration in time and space. Their destination is the Old City, and their time is strictly limited: most cruise ships arrive in the early morning and stay for less than 17 hours. It is estimated that up to 3,813 cruise passengers visit the Old City during a four-hour morning visit cruise. Since anchorages and berths are booked up to 3 years in advance it
----------------------------	--

	is comparatively easy to predict numbers of future arrivals.
Year launched	2012
Location	In the Buffer area
Compliance with Heritage status	In terms of the impact of large cruise ships, more concrete details on the foreseen solutions to the problem associated with high tourist numbers visiting the property in a very short time (including cruise ship tourism) were needed, in particular details of precisely how the City Management Plan and the Tourism Development Strategy would address present and future tourism challenges.
Compliance to spatial planning normative	a strategy is being prepared in coordination with the Management Plan. After adoption of the proposed buffer zone, legal documents will be introduced to limit the navigation or to prescribe special conditions for navigation in order to protect human lives, coasts, environment and other goods in the maritime area included in the buffer zone.
Public Discussion	The project ignored the strong protests from all sides: NGOs, neighbours, architects, politicians etc Concerns expressed by the NGO Srđ je naš about the impact of cruise ship tourism on the property was one the two initial reasons for the Reactive Monitoring Mission to take place. The NGO focused its concern on pollution, safety and the impact on the Island of Lokrum.
D-U.1 Urban morphology	An inevitable side effect of this tourism 'monoculture' has been the 'museumification' of the city with domestic buildings being replaced by holiday rental apartments. Out of the Dubrovnik's total population of 40,000 only about 1,500-2000 are permanent residents within the inscribed property, while a further 2,000 visitors are accommodated in apartments. Restaurants can cater for up to 4,000 covers.
D-U.2 City views and vistas	The solutions to this problem include limiting numbers visiting the property at any one time, spreading visitors away from the most popular attractions within the property and providing other attractions outside the property.
D-A.2 Link to key historic phases of city development (building styles/genres)	ICOMOS is of the view that it would be desirable to have legislation which limits, or prohibits, the passage and mooring of boats, ships and yachts (except for the passage of small boats transporting visitors to the island of Lokrum) in the coastal area between the old city and Lokrum island, in accordance with the proposed revision of the boundaries by extension of the buffer zone. The Mission noted a lack of consistent historical interpretation throughout the property. It was understood that the reason for this lack was to avoid intrusive signs.

Development Pressure Challenges

The pressures faced by Dubrovnik primarily stem from excessive tourism development and gentrification. Main challenges include depopulation, tourism overload, infrastructure strain and construction pressure due to the intense demand for new residential and tourist capacities in the areas surrounding the WHS.

Heritage Impact Assessment Report on potential impact of the planned project "Sports and Recreation Centre with a golf course and Bosanka North and Bosanka South Tourist Resorts" on the World Heritage Site of the "Old City of Dubrovnik" was prepared by the Institute of Urban Planning, Physical Planning and Landscape Architecture of the Faculty of Architecture, University of Zagreb, according to the Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for the properties of the World Heritage, issued by ICOMOS.

Conclusion

In conclusion, from the management point of view, the Old City of Dubrovnik must be understood as a whole, where the setting with its cultural and natural elements is an integral part of the HUL of Dubrovnik in regard to its functional and visual integrity.

The Spatial Development Plan of the City of Dubrovnik and the urban plans are instruments for its implementation and basis on which all permits for building and spatial interventions are issued. The relationship between the spatial planning system and other administrative areas (sectors) is regulated by special acts which establish vertical and horizontal cooperation. Although individual sectors participate in the process of drafting and adopting spatial planning documents, they draft their own sectoral documents independently. The previously adopted sectoral documents first undergo serious examination in relation to space in the process of drafting and adopting spatial plans. Considering the interconnectedness of the protection and conservation of cultural property and spatial planning issues, it is necessary to define the method of implementation (strengthen spatial plans through special acts as a tool for cultural heritage protection and preservation).

The disadvantage of this system is the lack of spatial and physical planning regulations appropriate for cultural and historic ensembles. The conservation database for the WHS buffer zone (September 2020) gives a detailed overview of conservation measures and guidelines for each area with common features located outside the protection limits of the WHS. After its integration into the General Urban plan of the City of Dubrovnik, it will be the basis for issuing construction related documents by the competent administrative department. In this way the spatial and physical planning documentation becomes the main instrument for the implementation of interventions in the buffer zone area, except for the area

encompassed by the national protection of the cultural, historic and urban ensemble of Dubrovnik, where the Act on Protection and Preservation of Cultural Property is applicable. It is necessary to insist on the requirement to implement urban and architectural tenders for public locations and buildings as well as for all other interventions in public spaces that are important for the city's contours, even if they are related to the reconstruction of existing buildings.

It is necessary for the Ministry of Culture and Media to horizontally align the Act on Protection and Preservation of Cultural Heritage to the Act on Environmental Protection and the Act on Physical Planning. At the same time, the Ministry of Culture and Media should draft a protocol for the implementation of the HIA in accordance with the UNESCO principles the lack of a mechanism for intersectoral cooperation in cultural heritage protection through spatial and physical planning documentation. The insufficient alignment of the Act on Protection and Preservation of Cultural Heritage to the Act on Environmental Protection and the Act on Physical Planning was identified as a problem as well.

5.2.7 Vienna, Austria

The Historic City of Vienna was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2001. Situated on the Danube River in the eastern part of Austria, it has an ancient history dating back from early Celtic and Roman times and uninterruptedly continuing as an important settlement into the medieval and Baroque period, eventually becoming the capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Historic centre of Vienna comprises an area of 371 ha. Attributes that sustain its Outstanding Universal Value, including its architectural and urban qualities and layout, illustrate its three major phases of development, medieval, Baroque, and the Gründerzeit – that symbolize Austrian and central European history.

The World Heritage Site covers an area of approximately 371 hectares (about 1 percent of Vienna's total urban area). Spatially, the World Heritage Site is defined by the Innere Stadt (Inner City – First District) and the entire Ringstrasse zone.

The Buffer Zone

Since the 1970s, the City of Vienna has designated almost 342 hectares within the area of today's buffer zone as a protection zone in accordance with the Building Code for Vienna, which has ensured the long-term preservation of the existing buildings and their value or has placed them under protection to preserve their local character. The urban area designated as a buffer zone essentially follows the boundaries of the old suburbs or currently protected zones of the City of Vienna. In the northeast, the buffer zone is bordered by the edge of buildings in the area of the left bank of the Danube Canal (City of Vienna, 2021)



Figure 5-60 view of 1600 Vienna – source Benevolo (Benevolo, 1993)

Values and Attributes

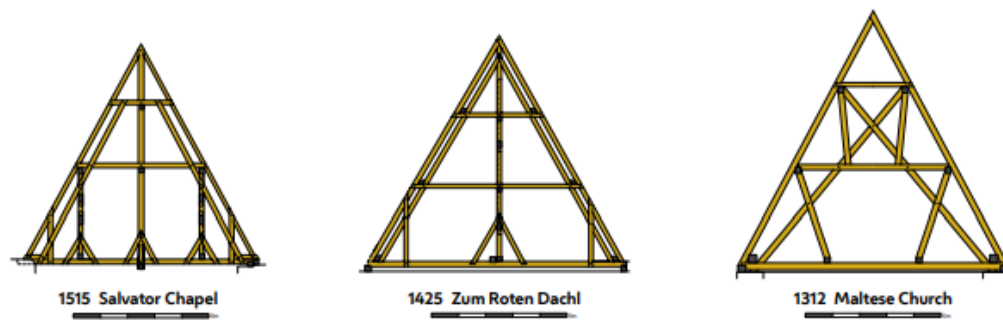
As shown in its nomination information in the World Heritage List, the Historic Centre of Vienna was inscribed based on Criteria ii, iv and vi. More precisely:

Criterion ii - “The urban and architectural qualities of the Historic Centre of Vienna bear outstanding witness to a continuing interchange of values throughout the second millennium.”

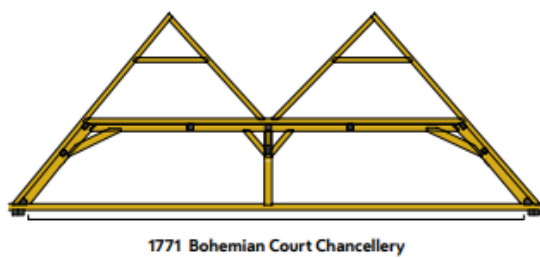
Attributes that convey values based on this criterion are: Urban morphology - increased urban space Roofs (see Figure 5-61) – Viennese roof trusses Squares - gardens and parks City vistas and views.

Criterion (iv) – Three key periods of European cultural and political development, the Middle Ages, the Baroque period, and the Gründerzeit, are exceptionally well illustrated by the urban and architectural heritage of the Historic Centre of Vienna.

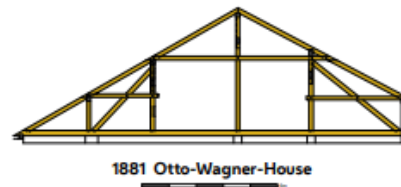
Attributes that convey values based on this criterion are: The Medieval and Baroque sacred buildings, urban structures, urban units including palaces and gardens, as well as the Gründerzeit (Founders’) Period Ringstrasse, town planning including urban spaces of Viennese modern architecture.



The **Salvator Chapel** (1515), the **Haus Zum Roten Dachl** (1429) and the **Maltese Church** (1312) represent important roof constructions and forms from the Middle Ages. (Fig. 13–15)



The **Bohemian Court Chancellery** (1711) is an exemplary roof construction from the Baroque period. (Fig. 16)



The roof construction and roof form of the **Otto Wagner House** (1881) are exemplary for the Gründerzeit period. (Fig. 17)

Figure 5-61 Examples of historic roof structures that are still preserved in the city (City of Vienna, 2021)

The fact that Historic Centre of Vienna has maintained its characteristic skyline is very important. St. Stephen's Cathedral topographical and spiritual centre of the city is the highest building in the world heritage zone (see Figure 5-62).

The 19th century Ringstrasse Debate – Aesthetics and Regulation

The transformation of Vienna in the mid-nineteenth century, represented by the development of the Ringstrasse, is an example of the conflict between emerging functionalist urban planning and traditional artistic principles, a debate fiercely engaged by figures like Camillo Sitte and Otto Wagner ¹¹⁵. It followed the 1857 imperial proclamation, which aimed to

¹¹⁵ Among the events Collins G., C. C. C. (1965). *Camillo Sitte and the birth of modern city planning*. Phaidon Press. , Collins, G. G., & Crasemann Collins, C. (1965). *Camillo Sitte and the birth of modern city planning*. Phaidon Press. mention several key points that seem to have inspired Sitte, such as Eitelberger lecture (1858) on city planning as an expression of culture and social systems referring to examples from classical times to present. This lecture stressed on the importance of the Ringstrasse project and its potential to produce great artistic buildings. Another event was the invitation of Semper (end of 1860s) to consult on the Hofburg area which he consulted in reference to his proposal in Dresden on the Zwinger, but it was not realized as he consulted. The

demolish the old bastions and to join the old city core to the periphery. As (Choay, 1970) states 17th century fortifications that had become useless owing to modern artillery were transformed into promenades and gardens but the formal aesthetic of their design was not modified. Several key regulatory and conceptual planning frameworks were developed to the purpose of this large project.

- Planning relied on the traditional Viennese method of utilizing a competition to solicit professional input, which Förster won under the motto "The strait road is the best".(Collins G., 1965)]
- Zoning: Described as virtually a German invention, zoning was by Baumeister¹¹⁶ and others as a necessary tool to maintain a sense of order.
- The *Bebauungsplan*: Sitte strongly urged the use of this concept, which he defined as a city plan conceived in 3D, showing the elevation of buildings. This idea eventually became the foundation for stricter and more detailed building regulations, particularly regarding zoning for height, as German planners utilized it in the 1890s.



Figure 5-62 View of the Vienna City Expansion Zone, c. 1873, Source: Museum of Viena author Gustav Veith¹¹⁷

other event was a report of the Austrian engineers and architects 1877 association about the state of works and the future of the city and which stressed on the artistic factors in city building.

¹¹⁶ Credited with having laid the basis for city planning as a scientific field, he was the first to insist that city planning was a function of vehicular traffic. He was a pioneer in zoning especially in its legal framework. Although Sitte wrote quite adversely about Baumeister's aesthetic proposals, he did stress artistic considerations in his book *Stadterweiterung* 1876 and Sitte took over some of his ideas. For example, the gridiron, radial, and triangular categorizing of planning which Sitte led off is right out of Baumeister. Source: Collins, G. G., & Crasemann Collins, C. (1965). *Camillo Sitte and the birth of modern city planning*. Phaidon Press.

¹¹⁷ Source: <https://www.habsburger.net/en/media/gustav-veith-panorama-vienna-city-expansion-zone-c-1873-pen-and-sepia>

Sitte provided practical suggestions for restoring city planning to an artistic basis, principles that became influential globally despite Vienna's planning office largely ignoring them.

- For Sitte, the character and beauty of a town lay in the *public spaces* provided to its citizens, specifically in their rhythmic interrelationships.
- *Chains of Plazas*: He preferred the use of a chain of dissimilar plazas joined together. It has in fact become an accepted architectural idea, in 1950 Gropius explained his new graduate quadrangle to the Harvard alumni in just such terms (Curtis, 1996).
- *Aesthetic Irregularity*: He believed that irregular building lines and projecting elements have a certain charm. He assumed that streets with an interrupted view were aesthetically superior, contrasting the use of uniform building front lines, which he did not find aesthetically preferable.
- *Three-Dimensional Planning*: His advocacy for the *Bebauungsplan* highlighted his belief that planning must be conceived in 3D, showing building elevations, rather than relying solely on flat, two-dimensional surveys.

Sitte was an opponent to Wagner who represented a more twentieth-century approach, where his concept of beauty arose out of a scrupulous compliance with the purpose of a project. While Wagner, influenced by Semper, also based his effects on visual principles, his emphasis on functionalism contrasted with Sitte's artistic and rhythmic arrangement of space.

Sitte applied his analysis to the area around the Votive Church in the Ring, which he perceived as an inert, ununified space where disparate edifices (church, university, chemical laboratory) stood as isolated units. His solution was to interconnect these buildings using a series of arcades and new construction adjoining the church, thereby partitioning the area. This achieved several goals: obtaining two new plazas, creating limited vistas to avoid the former feeling of vacuousness, establishing intimate enclosures and human scale, and generating a rich network of walkways (Choay, 1970).

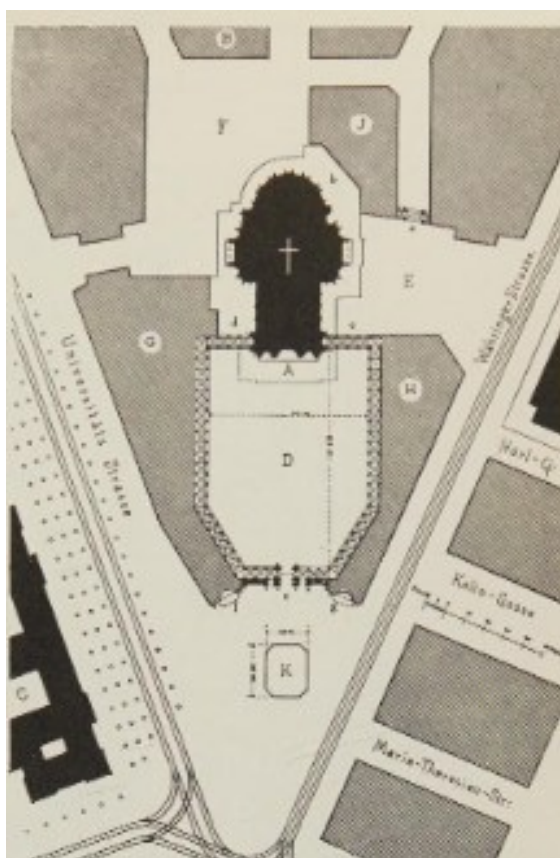


Figure 5-64 plan of the Votive Church by Sitte – linking buildings G and H and creating plazas D and F. Source(Choay, 1970)

View of the Votive Church 1856-79 (Collins G., 1965)

Analysis based on the Regulatory Indicators

<i>R-U.1 Development Pressure Challenges</i>	The historic centre and buffer zone is facing development pressure challenges. The World Heritage property is in the World List of Danger since 2017. The Federal Monument Protection Act has not embedded the UNESCO World Heritage sites so far and is very weak in protecting historic gardens as well as cultural landscapes.
<i>R-U.2 Existence of a management plan</i>	Yes, Due to numerous requests from UNESCO, the management plan is in force since 2021
<i>R-U.3 Regulatory limits / control of urban tissue</i>	Yes, based on Building Act, limitations on heights on new developments are in place due to the protection of the city skyline.

<i>R-U.4 Approach towards new constructions proposals</i>	The 2024 Unesco/Icomos mission notes deficiencies in the planning tools and legislation, the lack of an obligation to carry out impact assessments in a systematic way for all scales of projects that have the potential to adversely affect the OUV and attributes of the property. The various building codes and spatial planning regulations in Austria refer, if at all, to World Cultural Heritage and only deal marginally with cultural landscapes.
<i>R-U.5 Governance</i>	City of Vienna The majority of privately owned buildings are not listed. Only buildings owned by the public or the church – this amounts to c. 25% of the buildings in the core zone of the World Heritage area – are protected (heritage at risk)
<i>R-U.6 Community Engagement</i>	The community is active and concerned – public debates are active in Vienna. Austrian universities neither provide a specific higher education in monument protection nor do any educational institutions train cultural heritage experts and/or conservation architects specifically on a professional level.¹¹⁸
<i>R-A.1 Independent Assessments (ex. UNESCO / ICOMOS etc.)</i>	Yes (2002, 2015, 2018, 2024) Monitoring Unesco-Icomos missions have consistently taken part in Vienna since its inscription in World Heritage List in 2002

As stated in the Management Plan of the Historic Centre of Vienna, there are two building projects recognised as avant-garde examples of contemporary and internationally respected Viennese architecture, which also polarised the public opinion of the time.

¹¹⁸ Source: Icomos Austria H@R Michael Tetzet

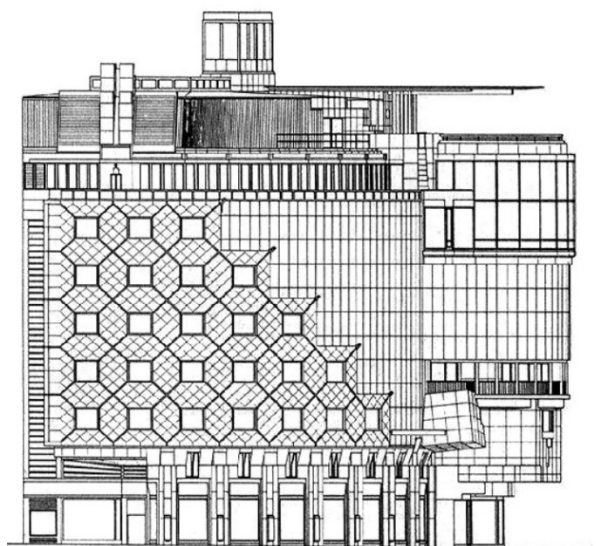
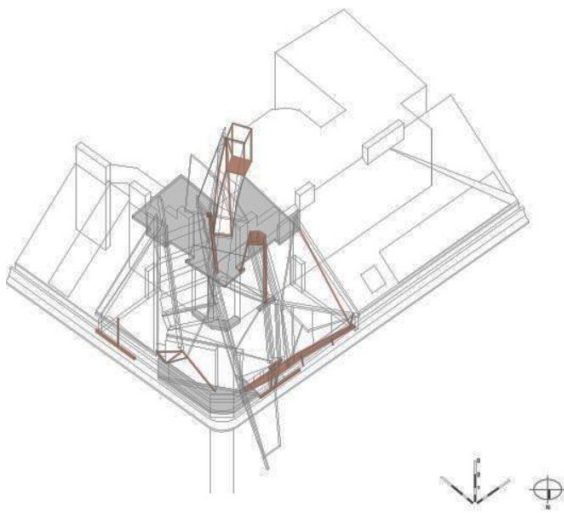


Figure 5-65 Falkestrasse project, 1983–88, Coop Himmelb(l)au, noted to be as the first deconstructivist construction in the world – it is roof extension whose steel/glass construction breaks through the cubature of the existing building¹¹⁹

Figure 5-66 The HaasHaus, 1985–90, Hans Hollein, which, together with the neighbouring hotel conversion (also Hollein), offers a contrasting architectural counterpart to St. Stephen's Cathedral. The building is listed since 2012. Photo credit (above) Petr Šmídek, 2008.¹²⁰

In 2017, the Historic Centre of Vienna, was put on the List of World Heritage in Danger due to a series of interventions and building policies. Selected projects listed below have raised a lot of discussions and debate.

¹¹⁹ Source: <https://divisare.com/projects/305869-coop-himmelb-l-au-wolf-d-prix-partner-rooftop-remodeling-falkestrasse-wien>

¹²⁰ Drawing and photo reference: <https://www.archiweb.cz/en/b/haas-haus>

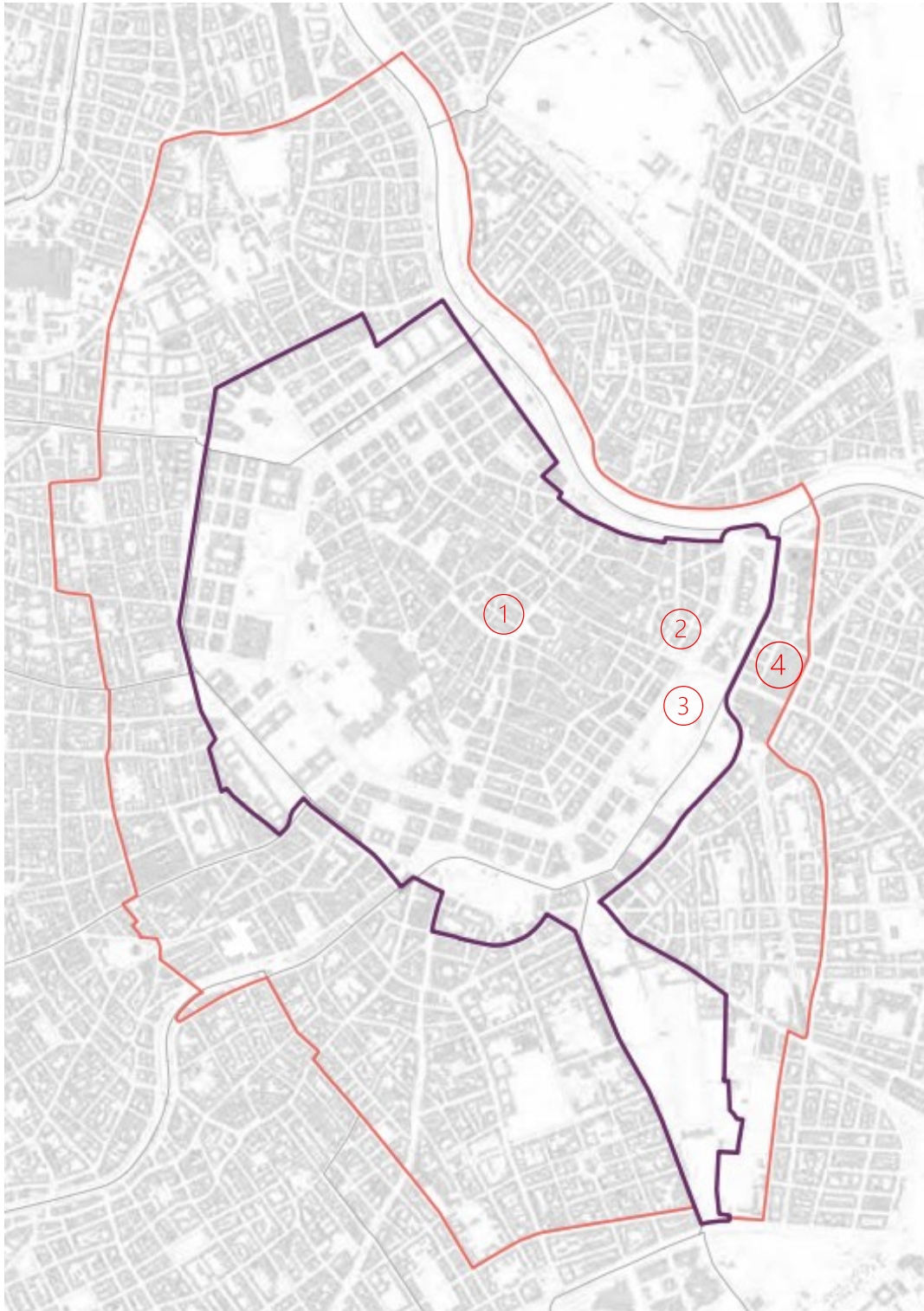


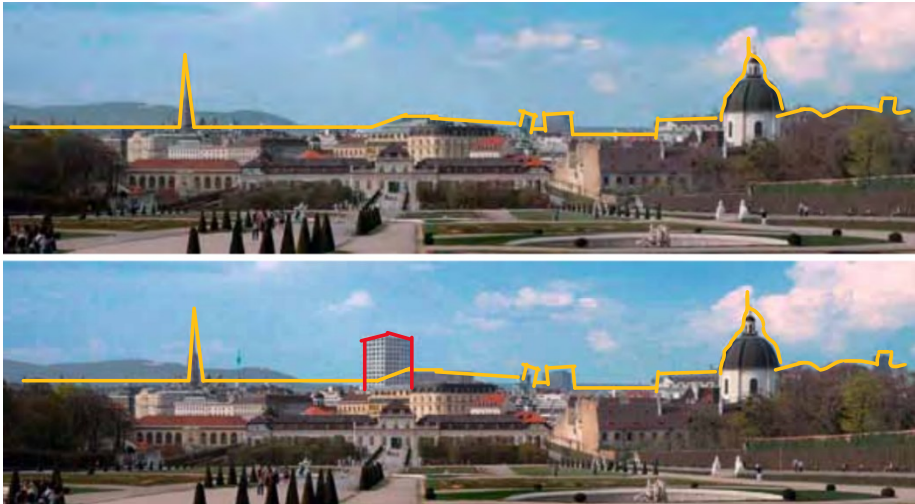
Figure 5-67 Zoning plan showing the Historic Centre and Buffer zone of Vienna (City of Vienna, 2021) as well as location of the projects 1.Haas Haus, 2. Falkestrase, 3.Hotel Intercontinental / Heumarkt and 4. Wien Mitte Project

Precedents Analysis based on Design Indicators

Name of the project	3 - Hotel Intercontinental / Heumarkt
Year launched	2012
Location	Core Zone – Historic centre of Vienna (close to the boundary)
Compliance with Heritage status	In 2013 WHC urged the state party of Austria to halt any redevelopment higher than existing structures. Several issues were identified¹²¹ 1. the specially protected zones of Vienna do not match with the buffer and core zones of the World Heritage site. 2. The area of the Hotel Intercontinental/ Heumarkt is not located within these specially protected zones of Vienna and is therefore not protected under Viennese law. 3. The existing object, the Hotel Intercontinental, is not a nationally listed monument, although it has monument qualities according to new findings.
Compliance to spatial planning normative	1. Project was launched based on a competition. According to ICOMOS Austria there were proposals that would have respected the visual integrity of the World Heritage. However, the winning project by Isay Weinfeld from Brazil. 2. In 2017 the city council changed the spatial planning law to legalise the project. Even the city's own planning principles, e.g. a high-rise exclusion-zone concept, were modified to make the project possible and a "Masterplan Glacis" tried to argue in favour of high-rise buildings within the area of the "Ringstrasse". 3. The management plan to protect the World Heritage site Historic City Centre of Vienna was never ratified by the provincial authorities of Vienna (Wiener Gemeinderat).
Public Discussion	The project ignored the strong protests from all sides: NGOs, neighbours, architects, politicians etc
D-U.1. Urban morphology	Massive volume as a threat for the surroundings¹²² 

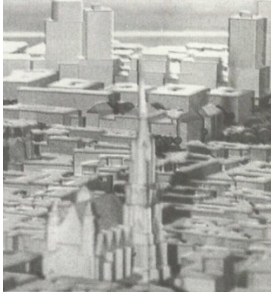
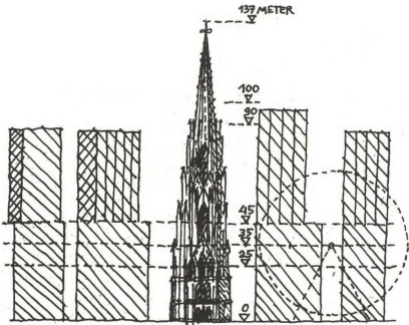
¹²¹ source Historic Centre of Vienna on UNESCO's List of World Heritage in Danger

¹²² source: Attack on the World Heritage Site "Historic Centre of Vienna, Wilfried Lipp, Icomos Austria 2014

	(Source: v-cube/Philipp Tebart/michael kloos planning and heritage consultancy)
D-A..1 City views and vistas	Hight and volume of the proposed development (<i>delineated with red color in the city view picture below</i>) are considered a threat for the entire skyline of the town. 
D-A.2. Link to key historic phases of city development (building styles/genres)	Located near the famous “Ringstrasse”, which represents the “Gründerzeit” period, one of three key periods of European cultural and political development, and one of the key elements of the Outstanding Universal Value of the Historic Centre of Vienna.

Name of the project	4 - Wien-Mitte station
Year launched	2002 - Architects Ortner and Ortner, Neumann and Partner and Lintl & Lintl.
Location	Buffer Zone - 800 m away from St.Stephen Cathedral.
Compliance with Heritage status	The City of Vienna was recommended to revise the Wien-Mitte project and to improve in total the basic conditions for the protection and care of the historic building stock in the World heritage zone.¹²³ In 2003 the City of Vienna halted the project and engaged to make a number of improvements such as: 1. New guidelines for planning and assessing high-rise building projects 2. Restrictions on roof extensions within the area of WH site

¹²³ Source: Mission of Icomos 2002

	3. Intensified cooperation between the municipal department of architecture and urban design with the federal office for the preservation of monuments.
Public Discussion	The project was accompanied by the strong protests from journalists, professionals, citizens,
D-U.1. Urban morphology	Initially, they included a cluster of 4 high-rise buildings, of which the highest was meant to be erected directly in the main axis of the quarter along the Landstrasser Hauptstrasse. Concerns focused on: High density of the blocks in the lower section.  A model of Vienna with St.Stephen cathedral in the foreground and the Wien Mitte towers in the background ¹²⁴
D-U.2. City views and vistas	Height of the buildings as a threat to the town silhouette 
D-A.1. Specific architectural features	Lack of architectural and urban quality (visual integrity of the city) 

¹²⁴ (die presse, 2002, cited in Icomos Austria H@R 2002-2003)

5.2.8 Graz, Austria

The historic centre of Graz was listed as a World Heritage site in 1999 as a fine example of a Central European urban complex with a harmonious blend of architectural styles and artistic movements that had succeeded each other since the Middle Ages. During the first years of this new century the inscribed property saw a series of contemporary architectural interventions, which touched upon a decades-long debate in architectural and conservation circles concerning building in historic context.

Historic Centre of Graz is listed based on the following Criteria and attributes:

Criterion (ii): The City of Graz – Historic Centre and Schloss Eggenberg reflect artistic and architectural movements originating from the Germanic region, the Balkans and the Mediterranean, for which it served as a crossroads for centuries. The greatest architects and artists of these different regions expressed themselves forcefully here and thus created brilliant syntheses.

Criterion (iv): The urban complex forming the City of Graz – Historic Centre and Schloss Eggenberg is an exceptional example of a harmonious integration of architectural styles from successive periods. Each age is represented by typical buildings, which are often masterpieces. The physiognomy of the city and of the castle faithfully tells the story of their common historic and cultural development.

A 2005 mission reported three cases where new architectural interventions, often severely contrasting with the historic context, had replaced historic buildings, among which the construction of the Thalia Centre that had resulted in the demolition of the protected building of the 'Kommod-House'. These new and contrasting architectural creations in the World Heritage site raised the question of the integrity of the property and the priority imposed on urban development projects which did not harmonise with the existing historic urban fabric, thereby threatening the site's Outstanding Universal Value. In order to prevent further fragmentation of the historic ensemble, a Management Plan was developed and put in place in 2007 and later in 2013. Moreover, the World Heritage property was extended to include Schloss Eggenberg, so as to preserve the historical link that existed between the city and the castle and thereby strengthening the integrity of the property. The extension resulted in a new, enlarged buffer zone. ¹²⁵

¹²⁵ Sources: World Heritage Committee State of Conservation Reports 29 COM 7B.63 and 30 COM 7B.76



Figure 5-68 World Heritage property – 1: Historic Centre 1999, 2: Schloss Eggenberg extension 2010, 3: buffer zone (source: Management Plan 2013)

Roof alteration to the department store Kastner & Öhler.

The traditional department store Kastner & Öhler is situated amidst the core zone of the World Heritage site “Historic Centre of the City of Graz”. It was constructed by the renowned theatre architects Fellner & Helmer at the end of the 19th century. This store has been remodelled several times in the course of the last century. The latest construction phase resulted in putting up a multi-gabled trench roof above the top floor ceiling, tiled with red clay tiles in accordance with the historic roofscape of Graz. In yet another extension scheme Kastner & Öhler then planned a new roof construction, designed with various capped steep gables with a ridge height more than 9 metres, according to the project of the Spanish architects Nieto/Sobejano, who were the winners of an architecture competition. In spite of protests from ICOMOS Austria the “compromise” found after a UNESCO/ICOMOS mission in October 2006 only resulted in a slightly reduced solution (slight changes in design and reduction of height). This could be understood as a signal for more roof alterations disturbing the visual integrity of the ensemble. The result of the competition is a totally inadequate and misunderstood interpretation of a medieval roofscape without any connection to the typology of the building. The multiple gabled and pointed zigzag structure of no regularity shows arbitrariness. Above all a roof covering in metal is now envisaged: a disaster. ICOMOS Austria holds the opinion that the project is in blatant contrast to the intentions of the World Heritage Convention. ICOMOS Austria



Figure 5-69 Traditional roofs Graz 1960s (left) and Traditional roofs before the project (right)



Figure 5-70 Graz, awarded project of the architects Nieto/Sobejano and project change after negotiation with UNESCO and ICOMOS

5.2.9 London, Great Britain

Modern London was born from tragedy. In the 17th century, the city endured political and religious turmoil, including the English Civil War that divided its people. Its population was exploding within an ancient city whose infrastructure had become obsolete. Then came the plague, and shortly thereafter the Great Fire of 1666, which destroyed large parts of the city and forced a massive reconstruction (Rost Architects, 2024)¹²⁶. This dramatic rupture marked the beginning of a new urban trajectory.

The first official proposal for comprehensive urban planning in London was introduced in 1909 when John Burns presented the Town Planning Bill. Prior to this, the landed estate remained the basic unit of urban development. One notable, though unrealized, project was Joseph Paxton's 1855 proposal to connect London's railway stations via a glass-enclosed "transport belt," designed to reduce travel time across the city and anticipate modern urban transit (Choay, 1970). This vision found partial realization in the London Underground,

¹²⁶ Ref. The Story Behind the Architecture and Construction of St. Paul's Cathedral and Sir Christopher Wren - 2024 <https://www.rostarchitects.com/articles/2024/5/2/the-story-behind-the-architecture-of-st-pauls-cathedral-and-sir-christopher-wren>

inaugurated in 1863. Although England was the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution, it remained more attached to traditions than other European countries. As Choay (1970) noted, the idea of full-scale urban revival, as implemented by Haussmann in Paris, did not take root in London, which evolved gradually and in layered forms.

London, was among the first cities to experience the pressure of development and fast growth due to the industrial revolution. Figure 5-71 shows the fast pace of the urban expansion of the city in the course of the last century. Due to the high density and extremely bad living conditions in workers neighbourhoods that lacked basic infrastructure and hygiene conditions, outbursts of diseases became a huge problem. Figure 5-72 is a depiction of a map aimed to identify the causes of casualties from Cholera in mid.19th century.

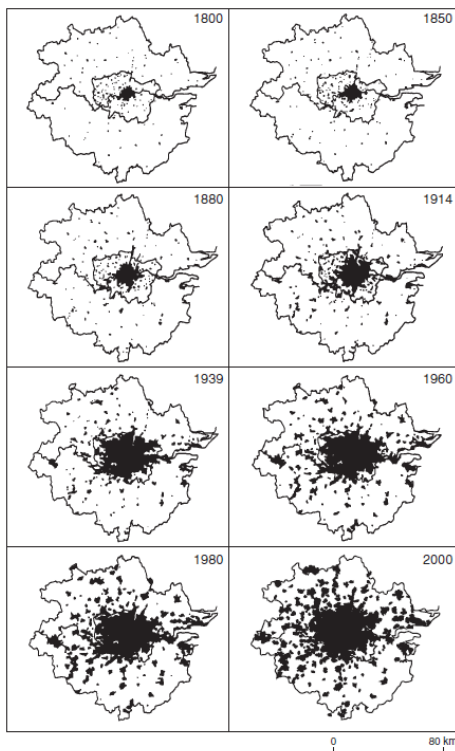


Figure 5-71 Urban expansion due to immigration of rural masses to London (Benevolo, 1968)

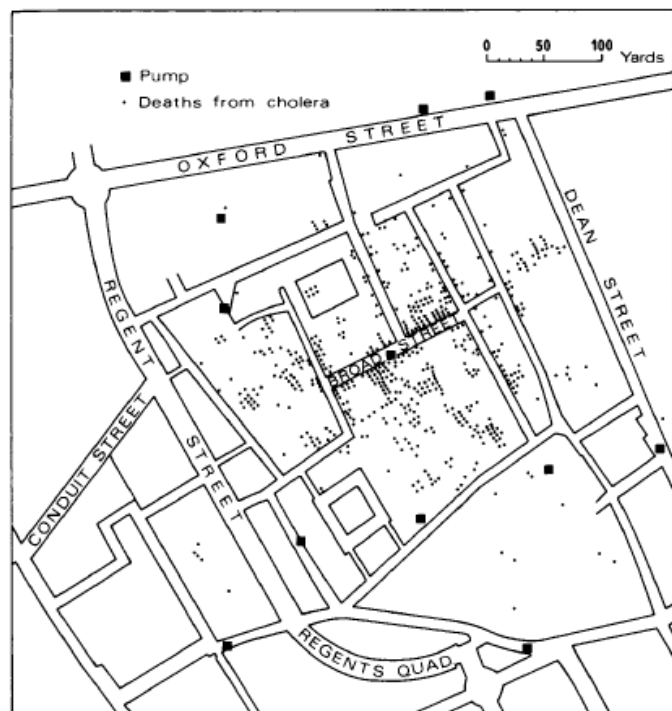


Figure 5-72 Dr. John Snow 1854 map aimed to identify causes of expansion of deaths from Cholera source: (Hall, 2014)

The English model of urban reconstruction and planning is often cited by urban theorists and practitioners abroad. Planning schemes, such as those by Patrick Abercrombie, significantly influenced the creation of new towns under national land-planning policy (Barlow Report, 1940). Urban plans propose a geometrical and ordered form for urban growth; many cities developed in a radial or centralized manner, often shaped by transportation networks. This is evident in Abercrombie's plan for London, which was based on the hypothesis of stabilizing and reducing congestion in the center while encouraging decentralization. Yet this objective of central decongestion was not realized: the 1961 census revealed that population density in central areas had in fact increased rather than decreased (Merlin, 1971).

In his *An Outline of European Architecture*, Pevsner, cited in Choay (1970) described Roehampton as “the finest housing estate of our time.” He emphasized how the London County Council, led by J. Leslie Martin, integrated landscape and architecture through streets, squares, and public gardens to achieve flexibility and liveliness in urban design. Choay (1970) argued that in English cities, residential patterns were conditioned by practical and aesthetic values established as early as the 17th century, persisting until the end of the Victorian era. In London, districts such as Bloomsbury, Mayfair, Belgravia, and Regent’s Park exemplify this planning logic. These areas were shaped by large landowners, whose estates provided the basis for controlled urban expansion, often leasing plots for 30 to 99 years to ensure long-term urban coherence. By the 19th century, London had become a mosaic of dormitory villages juxtaposed around an expanding core. Choay noted that while this type of planning was praised as a symbol of order and humanism, it remained fundamentally a 17th-century relic applied in the 19th century.

Historic Centre and World Heritage, Buffer Zone, and OUV

London does not have a single “Historic Centre” inscribed as a World Heritage Site. Instead, it includes multiple discrete sites, each with Outstanding Universal Value (OUV): the Tower of London, Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey, Maritime Greenwich, and Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (UNESCO, 2025). These sites are supplemented by listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments, and historic parks, creating a layered and heterogeneous historic environment (City of London, 2025).

The buffer zone is defined by UNESCO as “an area surrounding the World Heritage Site which has complementary legal restrictions placed on its use and development to provide an added layer of protection” (UNESCO, 2025). In London, statutory buffer zones are limited; protection relies on planning frameworks such as the London View Management Framework (LVMF) to safeguard the setting, including vistas, open spaces, and surrounding historic urban fabric (UNESCO, 2018). Each World Heritage Site in London is inscribed based on specific criteria, reflecting architectural, historical, and landscape attributes that contribute to its OUV. For instance, the Tower of London is valued for its historic continuity, military architecture, and symbolic role in British history, while Maritime Greenwich is recognized for its urban planning, classical architecture, and scientific associations (UNESCO, 2025). The setting of each site is essential; urban development that compromises sightlines or historic relationships may undermine its heritage value (London Borough of Greenwich, 2012).

Selected Projects in London

London struggles more with skyline impact rather than fabric integration.

1. The Shard project designed by Renzo Piano in 2012 is currently considered the tallest building in western Europe, the needle-point structure stands above the new London bridge quarter in the south bank district and hosts offices, 5-star hotel etc.

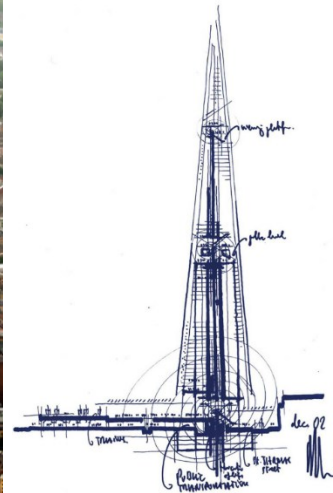


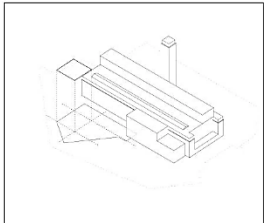
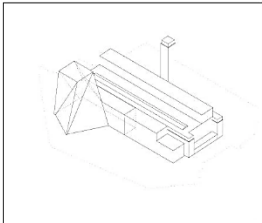
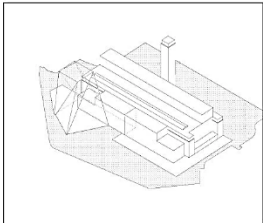
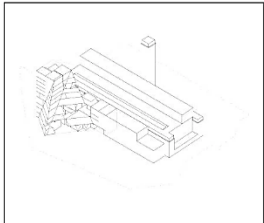
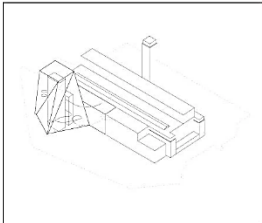
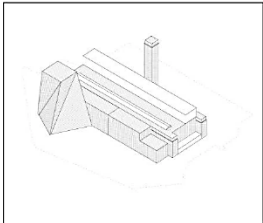
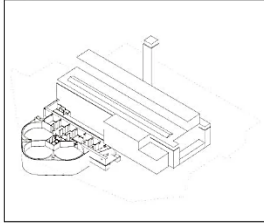
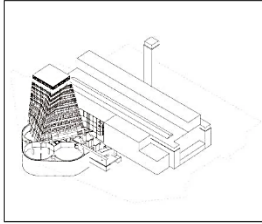
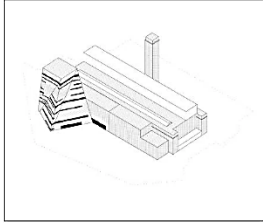
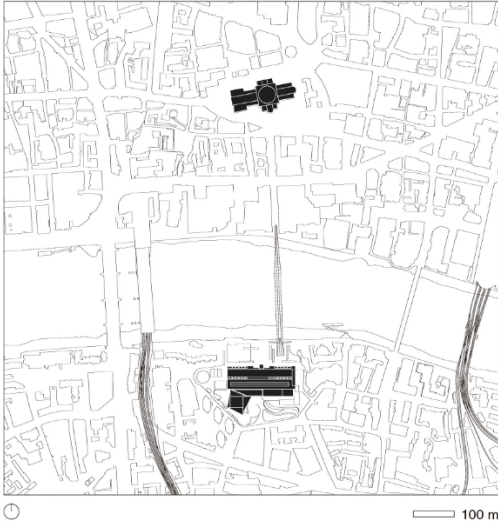
Figure 5-73 The Shard (Renzo Piano, 2012) – The project is not in the historic core directly but towering over the old city setting. It raised discussions about skyline and historic legibility¹²⁷

2. Tate Modern Extension (Herzog & de Meuron, 2016), Conversion of old power station and its new extension

Name of the project	Tate Modern Extension ¹²⁸
Year launched	Herzog & de Meuron, 2016
Location	South Bank
Compliance with Heritage status	The vertical orientation of the Switch House is clear, and, from the north, it can be seen rising behind the power station without competing with its iconic chimney. The old and new elements of the Tate Modern are expressed as a whole, a characteristic that is further emphasized by the use of the same base palette of bricks and brickwork.

¹²⁷Source for images: <https://www.designboom.com/architecture/renzo-piano-the-shard-in-london-now-complete/>

¹²⁸ <https://arquitecturaviva.com/works/ampliacion-tate-modern-londres-8>

	 Existing Building Geometry  Geometry  Public Realm  Program  Circulation  Brick Veil  Oil Tanks / Structure  Structure  Facade Cuts
Compliance to spatial planning normative	Since the opening of its first phase in 2000, the Tate Modern has exerted a significant influence on London, not only shaping the city's artistic, cultural, and social life but also acting as a catalyst for the urban development of the South Bank. The recently completed extension, known as the Switch House, reinforces this role by introducing new public spaces and enhancing connectivity between the Thames and Southwark. 
Public Discussion	It functions as a new anchor for the creative quarter, consolidating the area's role as a vibrant cultural hub
A.1. Urban morphology	The extension is widely recognized for its positive urban impact. It is praised for enhancing connections between the museum, its immediate locality, and the wider city, while also serving as more than a simple expansion of the museum.

A.2. City views and vistas	It integrates with the city views. 
A.4. Link to key historic phases of city development (building styles/genres)	It is continuing the original building's transformative influence on the South Bank and Bankside.

Chapter 6

Conclusions

This chapter finalises this work, summarising conclusions and pointing out aspects to be developed in future work.

It includes:

- Summary of the results on exploration of cross reference and interdependencies between historic buildings and their urban unit
- Introduce a values-based approach
- Propose a methodology for the planning of New developments in the setting of historic monuments – Heritage Impact Assessments

6.1 Summary of findings

The research uses concepts of continuity and interruption as analytical tools to examine the morphological and functional relationships between historic centres and their surrounding urban units.

The most significant findings, drawn primarily from the analysis in Chapters 2 and 3, relate identification of the modes of intervention and establishment of the regulatory indicators and design indicators. Modes of intervention are analysed in urban scale and architectural scale based on two main tendencies of integration and erasure of the historic city, and the relation between regulatory frameworks and project design processes.

1. Fragmentation:

Contemporary interventions frequently treat historic buildings as isolated monuments, detached both administratively and visually from their urban units. This dynamic supports the concept of the historic city evolving into an "archipelago" of designated historic buildings floating in a fragmented, post-architectural landscape.

2. Normative inflexibility and research vacuum in Buffer Zones:

While Albanian legislation requires buffer zones (or "Protected Zones") to preserve cultural values, light, height, volume, and perspective, normative inflexibility often negates new development within these areas. This leads to protected zones often being limited only to the historic building's yard or not designated at all, resulting in a failure to manage change holistically. Generally, permissions are considered individually leading to lack of information on the whole and to subjectivity, not taking into account the overall context.

3. Intense Development Pressure and Integrity Risk:

Case studies, particularly Berat and Tirana, demonstrate that accelerated economic activity, tourism pressure, and historical vulnerabilities (such as illegal constructions in the late 1990s) intensify the risk of eroding the integrity and authenticity of the property.

In Berat, the delay in implementing the Integrated Management Plan (IMP) created a management vacuum during a period of high investment interest.

4. Skyline and Visual Impact Conflicts (International Cases):

Conflicts between modern architecture and historic context are evident in international World Heritage sites. Projects in Vienna and Graz generated controversy primarily regarding their visual impact, scale, massing, and threat to the historic skyline. For instance, in Vienna, projects like the Hotel Intercontinental/Heumarkt contributed to the city being placed on the World Heritage List in Danger in 2017. Similarly, the Shard in London raised discussions about skyline and historic legibility, even though it was not in the historic core.

5. Need for Heritage Impact Assessment:

UNESCO / ICOMOS assessments consistently highlight deficiencies in planning tools and legislation across case studies (Berat, Vienna), specifically criticizing the lack of obligation to carry out Heritage Impact Assessments (HIAs) systematically for projects that might adversely affect the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).

6.2 Comparative Analysis

In this analysis shown in Table 6-1 the case studies are compared based on their compliance to the regulatory and design indicators established in this research. The comparative analysis of European and Albanian case studies highlights several key lessons for strengthening the management of historic urban areas and their buffer zones in Albania. Drawing on international practices observed in cities such as Vienna, Edinburgh, Bruges and Dubrovnik, the findings demonstrate that buffer zones are most effective when they function not only as regulatory boundaries but as integrated planning frameworks that combine guidance of urban development with the safeguarding of heritage values. The following lessons emerge as particularly relevant not only for the Albanian case studies of Berat, Krujë, and Tiran discussed in this research but for all of the historic centres in Albania.

1. Values analysis lies in the core of the processes for preservation and in the core of sustainable development

Results of the research show that in many cases values established in the normatives for preservation of cultural heritage do not encompass the diversity of disciplinary values that exist in historic urban areas. We should understand that values are diverse and dynamic as well as they are place specific. As such analysis of values should always precede the preservation and development policies. Analysis of case studies eg. Rome shows that even though the proposed developments were partially compliant with the normative, they were realized and even.

2. Buffer Zones can operate as active planning Instruments

One of the most significant insights from the comparative analysis is that buffer zones can be conceived as dynamic spatial frameworks, if they are established based on studies that are grounded in a values -based analysis. embedded in the spatial planning frameworks. In several European examples, buffer zones are integrated into broader urban planning strategies that regulate urban morphology, skyline protection, and architectural interventions.

Cities such as Vienna and Paris demonstrate how buffer zones can function as tools for managing the relationship between historic centres and contemporary urban

development, by requiring that new construction respects the spatial structure and visual integrity of the historic landscape. For Albanian sites, this implies that buffer zones should be incorporated into local spatial plans or in integrated Master Plans and urban design frameworks rather than treated solely as heritage protection areas.

3. Compliance with urban morphology and visual integrity is essential

Across most case studies, effective heritage management relies heavily on the control of urban morphology and visual relationships within the historic landscape. This includes maintaining historic street patterns, building scales, and important views and panoramas. For instance, skyline protection policies in Edinburgh and view corridor regulations around the Historic Centre of Brugge illustrate how the morphological analysis lies in the core of the understanding of the character and history of transformations of the historic city. It is also an example how visual integrity can be safeguarded through planning regulations. Similar approaches are particularly relevant for Albanian historic cities such as Berat and Krujë, where topography and landscape context are fundamental components of their heritage value.

In this context, planning tools such as height restrictions, building volume regulations, and protection of key visual corridors applied in the buffer zones should not be static requirements but should be grounded in detailed studies on the morphological and architectural attributes that convey the historic values.

4. Managing change requires collaboration between regulatory frameworks and disciplines related to architecture and urban planning.

The analysis reveals that most historic cities face significant development pressures, including tourism growth, infrastructure demands, and real estate speculation. These pressures are evident in cities such as Rome, and Dubrovnik.

Effective management of these pressures should not only depend on clear regulatory frameworks but should also promote the creation of a disciplinary building culture. Analysis of case studies show that development interventions that promote the tendency to integrate with the historic city may be achieved through open and transparent design competitions processes.

5. Governance is the key to effective Management Plans

Another key lesson is the importance of comprehensive management plans for World Heritage properties and historic urban areas. Successful examples such as Bruges and Edinburgh demonstrate that management plans provide a strategic framework that coordinates conservation policies, urban planning, tourism management, and community engagement.

In Albania, strengthening management planning mechanisms, particularly for Berat, can help ensure that heritage conservation is aligned with broader territorial planning strategies.

6. Community participation strengthens heritage management processes

The comparative analysis also highlights the role of community engagement in sustaining historic urban landscapes. In cities such as Edinburgh and Bruges, local communities are actively involved in heritage governance through participatory planning processes, cultural initiatives, and tourism management.

For Albanian historic towns, fostering community participation can help reinforce local identity and ensure that conservation strategies reflect the needs and aspirations of residents.

7. Integrating heritage conservation with the Historic Urban Landscape approach

Finally, the comparative study confirms the value of adopting the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach, promoted by UNESCO, which encourages the integration of heritage conservation into broader urban development strategies.

The HUL framework recognizes historic cities as living landscapes shaped by cultural, social, and environmental processes, rather than static monuments. Applying this approach in Albania would allow buffer zones to function as mediating spaces that reconcile continuity and change, enabling historic cities to evolve while preserving their cultural significance.

Table 6-1- Comparative Analysis of case studies and precedents based on regulatory and design indicators

City	Dominant Buffer Type	Heritage Values & Attributes	D-U.1. Urban morphology	D-U.2. City views	D-A.1. Arch. Features	D-A.2. Building styles / genres / typology)	R-U.1 Development Pressure	R-U.2 Management Plan	R-U.3 Regulatory limits	R-U.4 New Construction Approach	R-U.5 Governance	R.U.6 Community Engagement	HUL Level	R-A.1 Independent Assessments
Berat	Historic accretion	Ottoman urban fabric, river landscape	✓	✓	Δ	Δ	HP tourism	In process	Height/material limits	R	Ministry of Culture + Municipality	Moderate	Medium	Periodic monitoring UNESCO
Krujë	Vertical palimpsest	Castle, bazaar, mountain landscape	✓	✓	Δ	✓	MP tourism	Partial	Height & materials	R	National heritage institute + Municipality	Moderate	Low–Med	Limited monitoring
Tirana historic core	Planned projection	Ottoman remnants + Italian planning	Δ	Δ	Δ	Δ	HP development	No integrated WH plan	Partial	C / R	Municipality	Low	Low	No formal monitoring WH
Durrës	Vertical Palimpsest	Ancient, Byzantine, Ottoman, Early 20th cent.	Δ	—	—	—	HP tourism and development	Yes (partial for the archaeological area)	limiting of new construction due to archaeological potential	R	Municipality + Ministry of Culture	Moderate	Low	Assessments from the civil societies on the threats to the archaeological layers.
Rome	Vertical palimpsest	Ancient, Renaissance, Baroque layers	✓	✓	—	—	HP tourism	Yes	Strong height/visual limits	C / R	Municipality + Italian Ministry of Culture	Moderate	High	Multiple Advisory Bodies Evaluations
Vienna	Planned projection	Imperial ensemble, Ringstrasse	Δ	✓	✓	—	HP skyline conflict	Yes	Strong skyline limits	C / R	City of Vienna + Federal heritage office	High	High	UNESCO reactive monitoring
Graz	Historic accretion	Medieval fabric, Schlossberg landscape	✓	✓	✓	✓	MP development	Yes	Height/material control	C / R	Municipality + Federal heritage office	High	High	UNESCO monitoring
London (Tower area)	Planned projection	Medieval fortress and Thames views	Δ	✓	Δ	Δ	HP development	No	Protected view corridors	C / R	Historic England + Greater London Authority	High	High	UNESCO monitoring
Paris (Seine banks)	Historic accretion	Monumental river landscape	✓	✓	✓	✓	HP tourism	Yes	Strong skyline regulations	C / R	City of Paris + Ministry of Culture	High	High	UNESCO monitoring
Edinburgh	Planned projection	Georgian planning ensemble	✓	✓	✓	✓	HP tourism	Yes	Skyline limits	C / R	City of Edinburgh + Historic Environment Scotland	High	High	UNESCO monitoring
Warsaw	Planned projection	Post-war reconstruction heritage	Δ	Δ	Δ	✓	MP tourism	Yes	Height limits	R	National heritage board + municipality	Moderate	Medium	UNESCO monitoring
Dubrovnik	Landscape buffer	Walled maritime city	✓	✓	✓	✓	HP tourism	Yes	Strict skyline limits	R	City of Dubrovnik + National heritage authority	High	High	UNESCO monitoring missions
Bruges	Historic accretion	Medieval canals, intact morphology	✓	✓	✓	✓	MP tourism	Yes	Strict design guidelines	C / R	City of Bruges heritage office	High	High	UNESCO monitoring

✓	Indicator applied
Δ	Indicator partially applied
—	Indicator not applied
C	Projects proposed through Competition
R	Projects proposed based on Regulation
P	New Constructions Prohibited
HP	High Pressure
MP	Medium Pressure
	Urban Scale Indicator
	Architectural Scale Indicator

6.3 Policy Implications and Recommendations

To manage change effectively and integrate heritage values into urban governance, the following steps are recommended:

1. Establish Clear Regulatory Frameworks at Local Level:

Rather than viewing conservation as a separate or restrictive discipline, these steps advocate for a shift toward an integrated territorial approach. This begins with the establishment of clear regulatory frameworks at the local level, where specific design guidelines are derived from comprehensive studies of entire urban units. By focusing on the "whole" rather than isolated monuments, cities can create a more cohesive development path. Regarding historic centres but also single monuments, an one-size-fits-all protective zone around listed buildings is not effective enough to prevent the unsuitable impact of new development proposals on the integrity of the surroundings of listed buildings. In cases of historic centres, the aspect of the ensemble is core to the statement of outstanding universal value. The option to classify the property within the national legislation as an urban landscape can be a very effective tool.

Developing and introducing specific design guidelines based on studies that focus on whole.

2. Integrate Historical Continuity into Architectural Culture

Architectural practice should adopt a critical, historically conscious stance, moving beyond polemics. Academic study programs should include in their research projects topics related to study and manage change in historic centres and buffer areas. This requires a shift in both practice and education. Architects should adopt a critically conscious stance that moves beyond surface-level aesthetics to engage deeply with historical context of urban units.

Introducing the instrument of Heritage Impact Assessment in projects proposals either in Historic Centres or Buffer zones can be a good way to move towards development of an architectural culture that embraces integration with historic built areas rather than erasure.

3. Implement the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) Approach with Context-Sensitive Criteria

The HUL framework necessitates a conceptual shift toward treating heritage as a dynamic system. Because the HUL framework does not prescribe universal metrics, it necessitates the development of context-sensitive criteria. These must be locally tailored and negotiated

among stakeholders to ensure heritage is treated as a dynamic, living system rather than a static object.

4. Addressing the Complexity of Multi-Layered Heritage Values through participation:

Planning processes must explicitly accommodate negotiation among sometimes conflicting layers of value (physical, social, economic, intangible) through transparent assessment and participatory decision-making. This negotiation is particularly vital when addressing the complexity of multi-layered heritage values. Planning processes must become more transparent and participatory, explicitly accommodating the often-conflicting social, economic, and intangible layers of a site.

5. Strengthening integration between Territorial Planning and Heritage Conservation:

Ultimately, the goal is to strengthen the integration between territorial planning and heritage conservation. By positioning the management of change at the intersection of these two fields, heritage becomes an active, structural component of the city, protecting historical foundations while enabling necessary, adaptive evolution.

6. Visual impact assessments

When the depends on respect for the special visual quality of the ensemble and its setting it is important to develop visual impact assessment studies by independent bodies at an early stage of planned new intervention in the area. This will allow measures to be taken during the planning process to avoid negative impact on the values of the properties.

7. Terms of reference for development of selected areas

In order to avoid discrepancies between cultural values and change of use at a particular site, preliminary studies should analyse the specific values of the area. Basic requirements related to preservation of the declared values have to be formulated prior to defining binding conditions for future development.

6.4 Suggestions for future research and practice

The findings of this research underscore the necessity of evolving current spatial strategies to better align with the complexities of Historic Urban Landscapes (HUL). Moving forward, the following areas of focus are proposed to bridge the gap between regulatory aspects of conservation and the disciplinary aspects of architectural design and urban planning.

Future work should prioritize the development of integrated tools that promote the establishment of buffer zones based on studies that adopt a values -based approach. as active sites of sustainable development.

References

- Adhami, S. (1976). Rezultate dhe detyra në fushën e mbrojtjes dhe punës kërkimore restauruese të monumenteve të kulturës. *Monumentet*, 1976/11, 5-22.
- National List of Cultural Heritage Assets, (2025a). <https://iktk.gov.al/pasuri-kulturore/>
- Albania. (2025b). *State of Conservation Reports of World Heritage sites "Historic centres of Gjirokastra and Berat"*. Retrieved from whc.unesco.org/en/soc/4742
- Decision No.170 "On the approval of the regulation and administration of the Museum City of Berat", (1961a).
- Decision No.172 "On the proclamation of museum cities", (1961b).
- Decision 16.10.1948 "On the proclamation of the first list of monuments put under state protection", (1948).
- Albania, S. P. (2025). *State of Conservation Reports of World Heritage sites "Historic centres of Gjirokastra and Berat"*. whc.unesco.org/en/soc/4742
- Aliaj, B. (2009). Editorial, Hapësira Publike si dialog i dimensionit teknik dhe politik. *Forum A+P vol.1*, 5-13.
- Aliaj, B. (2010). *Tirana: The challenge of urban development*. Co-PLAN.
- Aliaj, B., Lulo, K., & Myftiu, G. (2003). *Tirana, The challenge of Urban Development*. SEDA and Co-Plan.
- Angéilil, M., & Siress, C. (2012). The Paris" banlieue": Peripheries of inequity. *Journal of International Affairs*, 57-67.
- Australia, I. (1979). *Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, Burra Charter*.
- Baçe, A. (1988). Studim mbi zonifikimin arkeologjik të qytetit të Durrësit. *Monumentet*, 2/1988, 55-59.
- Bandarin, F. (2024). *Changing heritage: How internal tensions and external pressures are threatening our cultural and natural legacy*. Routledge.
- Bandarin, F., & Oers, R. v. (2012). *The historic urban landscape: managing heritage in an urban century*. Wiley Blackwell.
- Bandarin, F., & Van Oers, R. (2012). *The Historic Urban Landscape Managing heritage in an urban century*. Wiley Blackwell.
- Benevolo, L. (1968). *The origins of modern town planning*. MIT Press.
- Benevolo, L. (1971). *The Origins of Modern Town Planning*. MIT Press. <https://mitpress.mit.edu/9780262520188/the-origins-of-modern-town-planning/>
- Benevolo, L. (1977). *Roma oggi*. Edizioni Laterza.
- Benevolo, L. (1993). *Storia della Città; La città moderna*. Editori Laterza.
- Benevolo, L., Giura Longo, T., & Melograni, C. (1977). *La progettazione della città moderna*. Laterza.
- Biberaj, E. (2019). *Albania in Transition: The Rocky Road to Democracy*. Routledge.
- Brand, S. (1995). *How buildings Learn – What happens after they're built?* Penguin.
- Buka, I., Plyku Demaj, M., & Kumaraku, L. (2023). Exploring the dialectic between

- permanence and change. The case of Epidamn Boulevard in Durrës. Book of Proceedings,
- Buka , I., Plyku Demaj, M., & Kumaraku, L. (2024). Exploring the dialectic between permanence and change. The case of Epidamn Boulevard in Durrës. International Conference "Issues of Housing, Planning and resilient development of the Territory towards Euro-Mediterranean Perspectives", Tirana.
- Caniggia, G., & Maffei, G. L. . . (2001). *Architectural Composition and Building Typology: Interpreting Basic Building* (Vol. 176). Alinea Editrice.
- Çapeli, L., Priftuli Semini, M., & Nepravishta, F. (2016). Overview of the Italian architecture in Durrës from 1920 to 1944. *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*, 885-890.
- Choay, F. (1969). The modern city: Planning in the 19th century. In *Planning and Cities*. George Brazillier Inc.
- Choay, F. (1970). *The modern city ; planning in the 19th century*. New York : G. Braziller. <http://archive.org/details/moderncityplanni0000choa>
- Choay, F. (2001a). *The invention of the historic monument*. New York: Cambridge University Press. <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/description/cam021/00020383.html>
- Choay, F. (2001b). *The invention of the historic monument*. Cambridge University Press.
- Choay, F. (2007). *L'allegorie du patrimoine* (3rd ed.). Editions du Seuil.
- The CIAM Charter of Athens, 1933: Outcome of a similar effort. (1963). *Ekistics*, 16(95), 263-267. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43622757>
- City Council, E. (2017-2022). *Management Plan of Old and New towns of Edinburgh, World Heritage Site*. World Heritage Centre: UNESCO Retrieved from <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/728/documents/>
- City of Vienna. (2021). *Management Plan of the Historic Centre of Vienna*. Unesco World Heritage Centre
- City of Warsaw. (2013). Retrieved from <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/30/documents/>
- Collins G., C. C. C. (1965). *Camillo Sitte and the birth of modern city planning*. Phaidon Press.
- Collins, G. G., & Crasemann Collins, C. (1965). *Camillo Sitte and the birth of modern city planning*. Phaidon Press.
- Congress of Athens. (1931). *The Athens Charter*. Athens: First International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments Retrieved from <https://landscapes.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Athens-Charter-for-the-Restoration-of-Historic-Monuments-1931-International-Council-on-Monuments-and-Sites.pdf>
- Corbusier, L. (1967). *The Radiant City: Elements of a Doctrine of Urbanism to be Used as the Basis of Our Machine-Age Civilization*. Orion Press.
- Corbusier, L. (1973a). *The Athens Charter* (A. Eardley, Trans.). Grossman Publishers. <https://www.scribd.com/doc/216944688/The-Athens-Charter>
- Corbusier, L. (1973b). *Precisions on the Present State of Architecture and Urbanism* (E. A., Trans.). MIT Press.
- Corbusier, L., & Eardley, A. (1973). *The Athens Charter*, Grossman Publishers.
- Council of Ministers, A. (2018). *Law No.27 "On Cultural Heritage and Museums"*. Albania Retrieved from <https://www.bksh.al/bksh/Ligje/Ligji.nr27-dt.17-05-2018.pdf>
- Cullen, G. (2012). *Concise townscape*. Routledge.

- Culot, M., & Krier, L. e. (1980). *The Counter-Projects*. Archives d'Architecture Moderne.
- Curtis, W. (1996). *Modern Architecture since 1900*. Phaidon Press Limited.
- Cusack, A. (2008, 01.09.2025). Santa Maria della Pace. <https://www.andrewcusack.com/2008/santa-maria-della-pace/>
- D'Auria, A., & Di Ruocco, I. (2022). An Integrated Model to Assess the Impact on World Heritage Sites. The Case Study of the Strategic Plan for the Buffer Zone of the UNESCO Site "Pompeii, Herculaneum and Oplontis". INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM: New Metropolitan Perspectives,
- Demaj, M. P. (2024). Continuity and Interruption in Architecture - The case of historic urban landscape of Finiq (ancient Phoenicia), Albania. *The Scientific Journal of the Observatory of Mediterranean Basin*(1-2), 116-127.
- Demaj, M. P., & Çuku, R. (2022). Exploring reconciliation of conservation and development through a values-based approach in territorial planning. The case of the old bazaar of Kruja as urban landscape. *CHRONICLES OF EVER-CHANGING CITYSCAPES*, 19.
- Demaj, M. P., Luarasi, S., & Nika, B. (2026). The Relationship Between Heritage Buildings and Their Urban Unit—Reinterpreting the Role of the Urban Context in Historical Habitats Facing Rapid Transformations, Case of Tirana. In *Self-Sufficient Cities and Sustainable Habitats: Perspectives and Case Studies* (pp. 113-124). Springer.
- Demaj, M. P., Mitrojorgji, J., & Gjata, K. (2024). Beyond the Walls - The Impact of urban sprawl on the fortifications in Albania. *Defensive Architecture of the Mediterranean*,
- Dhamo, S. (2009). Hapësira midis mbijetesës dhe tentativës drejt të pamundurës. *Forum A+P vol.1*, 16-29.
- Dhamo, S., Aliaj, B., & Kristo, S. (2019). *Albania: Decades of architecture in political context*. Mury Salzmann.
- Dhamo, S., Thomai, G., & Aliaj, B. (2016). *Tirana, Qyteti i Munguar*. Polis Press.
- Dosio, G. A. (1569). *Vrbis Romae aedificiorvm illvstrivmqvae svpersvnt reliqviae 1533-approximately 1609*. Florence. <https://archive.org/details/vrbisromaeaedifi00dosi>
- Fathy, H. (1973). *Architecture for the poor: an experiment in rural Egypt*. University of Chicago press. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226239149.001.0001>
- Fischer, O. W. (2020). Institutionalized Critique? On the Re(birth) of Architectural Theory after Modernism: ETH and MIT Compared. In R. H. S. Loosen, & H. Heynen (Ed.), *The Figure of Knowledge: Conditioning Architectural Theory, 1960s - 1990s* (pp. 145–160). Leuven University Press. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv16x2c28.9>
- Floridi, L. (2014). *The 4th Revolution: How the infosphere is reshaping human reality*. Oxford University Press.
- Frampton, K. (1995). *Studies in Tectonic Culture*. MIT Press. <https://mitpress.mit.edu/9780262561495/studies-in-tectonic-culture/>
- Frashëri, K. (2004). *Historia e Tiranës*. Botimet Toena.
- Giedion, S. (2009). *Space, time and architecture: the growth of a new tradition*. Belknap Press.
- Giovannoni, G. (1931). *Vecchie città ed Edilizia nuova*. Tipografia Sociale Torinese.
- Giovannoni, G. (1943). *L'Urbanistica dall'antichità ad oggi*. Sansoni.
- Giovannoni, G. (1995). *Vecchie città ed edilizia nuova*. <https://www.libreriauniversitaria.it/vecchie-citta-edilizia-nuova->

[giovannoni/libro/9788825171273](https://www.giovannoni.org/libro/9788825171273)

- Giovannoni, G., & Semes, S. W. . (2025). *New building in old cities : writings by Gustavo Giovannoni on architectural and urban conservation* Getty Conservation Institute. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/ji.17842146>
- Gold, J. R. (1998). Creating the Charter of Athens: CIAM and the functional city, 1933-43. *Town Planning Review*, 69(3), 225.
- Hall, P. (2014). *Cities of tomorrow: an intellectual history of urban planning and design since 1880* (Fourth edition ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.
- National List of Cultural Heritage Assets (Cultural Monuments and Sites), (2026). <https://iktk.gov.al/pasuri-kulturore/>
- Heuer, C. P. (02.02.2026). Viewing Ruins. *The Speculum Romanae Magnificentiae - digital collection*. <https://speculum.lib.uchicago.edu/itinerary/heuer.html>
- Hidri, H., & Hidri, H. (2014). *Historia e Durrësit*. Botimet Jozef.
- Hobsbawm, E., & Ranger, T. . (1983). *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hosagrahar, J. (2015). *Urban Heritage for Resilience*. UNESCO. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/in/documentViewer.xhtml?v=2.1.196&id=p::usmarcdef_0000387773&file=/in/rest/annotationSVC/DownloadWatermarkedAttachment/attach_import_c87af7be-9140-4a70-82d4-c6d5f03f7bf1%3F_%3D387773eng.pdf&locale=en&multi=true&ark=/ark:/48223/pf0000387773/PDF/387773eng.pdf#Third%20consolidated%20Results_2011%20Recommendation_final.indd%3A.156725%3A2134
- The Nara document on authenticity (1994), (1994).
- XI'AN Declaration on the conservation of the setting of heritage structures, sites and areas, (2005). XI'AN
- ICOMOS. (2014). *Advisory Body Evaluation (Historic Centre Warsaw)*. UNESCO Retrieved from <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/30/documents/>
- ICOMOS. (2018). *Advisory Body Evaluation (Historic Centre Dubrovnik)*. World Heritage List Documents UNESCO Retrieved from <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/95/documents/>
- ICOMOS. (2024). *Advisory Body Evaluation (Historic Centre Paris)*. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/600/documents/>
- IUCN. (1975-1976). *IUCN yearbook, 1975-76 : annual report of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources for 1975 and for January-May 1976*. <https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/5984>
- Jacobs, J. (1992). *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (Later Printing ed.). Vintage. <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/86058/the-death-and-life-of-great-american-cities-by-jane-jacobs/>
- Jallon, B., Napolitano, U., & Bouttée, F. E. (2017). *Paris Haussmann: Modèle de ville/Paris Haussmann: a model's relevance*. Park Books.
- Jallon, B. N., Umberto; Bouttée, Franck (Eds.). (2017). *Paris Haussmann: A Model's Relevance*. Park Books.
- Jencks, C. (2011). *The story of Postmodernism - Five Decades of the Ironic, Iconic and Critical in Architecture* Wiley & Sons Ltd.
- Jokilehto, J. (1986). *A History of Architectural Conservation* University of York, England]. <https://www.iccom.org/publication/history-architectural-conservation>
files/380/history-architectural-conservation.html

- Jokilehto, J. (2010). Notes on the definition and safeguarding of HUL. *City & Time*, 4((3): 4).
- Jokilehto, J. (2013). The context of the Venice Charter (1964) *Conservation and Management of Archaeological Sites* 2 (4) 229–233. .
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1179/135050398793138762>.
- Juma, M., & Turner, M. (2019). Zanzibar: The HUL Approach Explored. In *Reshaping Urban Conservation: The Historic Urban Landscape Approach in Action* (pp. 529-543). Springer.
- Kabashi, G. (2020). *Leksionet e tërmetit të vitit 1926 për rindërtimin e Durrësit*. Retrieved june 2024 from <https://www.reporter.al/2020/01/16/leksionet-e-termetit-te-vitit-1926-per-rindertimin-e-durresit/>
- Koolhaas, R. (1994). *Delirious New York: a retroactive manifesto for Manhattan*. The Monacelli Press, LLC.
- Koolhaas, R. (2004). Preservation is overtaking us. *Future Anterior*, 1(2), 1-3.
- Kosta, S. (1986). 20 vjet veprimtari për mbrojtjen, studimin dhe restaurimin e monumenteve. *Monumentet* 1986/1, 7-8.
- Kostof, S. (1991). *The City Shaped: Urban Patterns and Meanings Through History*. Little, Brown and Company.
- Koylowski, J., & Peterson, A. (2005). *Buffer Planning-towards sustainable development*. Ashgate Publishing Limited.
- Krasniqi, A. (2022). Three decades later: A summary of Albania's transition. *Studime Historike* 2022/1, 177-200.
- Krautheimer, R. (1949). Some Drawings of Early Christian Basilicas in Rome: St. Peter's and S. Maria Maggiore. *The Art Bulletin* 31 (3), College Art Association.
<https://doi.org/DOI:10.2307/3047240>
- Krén, E. M., Daniel. (1996). *Web Gallery of Art*
https://www.wga.hu/html_m/c/cortona/5/pace4.html
- Krier, L. (1978). The reconstruction of the city. *La Reconstruction de la Ville Européenne: Architecture Rationnelle= The Reconstruction of the European City: Rational Architecture*. Brussels: Archives d'Architecture Moderne.
- Lazzari, M. (1942). Restauro dei monumenti e urbanistica. "Le Arti", 1942-1943(1), 3-7.
http://periodici.librari.beniculturali.it/visualizzatore.aspx?anno=1942-1943&id_immagine=1110858&id_periodico=1069&id_testata=20
- Leitao, L. (2011). *The protection of World heritage settlements and their surroundings* The University of Edimburgh].
- Leppore, G. (2016). *Antiche Citta e Paesaggi*. Ed:Puglia.
- Liang, W., Ahmad, Y., & Mohidin, H. H. B. (2023). The development of the concept of architectural heritage conservation and its inspiration. *Built Heritage*, 7(1), 21.
- Lu, Z. (2014, 2014, May). Evolution of cultural heritage conservation philosophy through the lens of the revised China principles Beijing. International Principles and Local Practices of Cultural Heritage Conservation, National Heritage Centre of Tsinghua University.
- Luarasi, S. (2021). Albanian Archipelagos: The City of a Non-Normativity Foretold. *Forum A+P, Tel Quel Architecture*(22), 89-93.
<https://press.universitetipolis.edu.al/book/albanian-archipelagos-the-city-of-a-non-normativity-foretold-skender-luarasi/>
- Luarasi, S. (2022). The destructive rebirth of the Pyramid. *Forum A+P*, 108-111.

- Lv, R., Liu, Y., Zhang, L., & Kong, D. (2022). Urban historic heritage buffer zone delineation: the case of Shedian. *Heritage Science*, 10(1), 64.
- Lynch, K. (1964). *The image of the city*. MIT press.
- Marshall, D. (2011). *Preparing world heritage Nominations*. UNESCO.
- Mëhilli, E. (2017). *From Stalin to Mao*. Cornell University Press.
- Meksi, A. (2004). *Restaurimi i Monumenteve të Arkitekturës*. Uegen.
- Menghini, A. B., Pashako, F., & Stigliano, M. (2012). *Architettura Moderna Italiana per le Citta D'Albania. Modelli e interpretazioni*. Dudaj.
- Moholy-Nagy, S. (1968). *Matrix of Man: An Illustrated History of the Urban Environment*. Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers.
- Moudon, A. V. (2019). Urban Morphology as an Emerging Interdisciplinary Field (1997). *Historic Cities: Issues in Urban Conservation*, 8, 223.
- Mousavi, S. M., & Hosseininassab, S. (2023). Design Solutions for Revitalisation of Buffer Zones in Cultural Heritage Sites: Case study: Kampung Jawa, Melaka, Malaysia. *Pakistan Journal of Engineering and Applied Sciences*.
- Mumford, E. P. (2002). *The CIAM discourse on urbanism, 1928-1960*. MIT press.
- Norberg-Schulz, C. (1979). History of World Architecture: Baroque Architecture. *Electa: Milan, Italy*.
- Norberg-Schulz, C. (1980). *Genius loci : towards a phenomenology of architecture* | WorldCat.org. Rizzoli, New York. <https://www.worldcat.org/title/1120370258>
- Organisation, C. (2008). Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention. *Paris, France*.
- Orhani, E. (2016). Historia e restaurimit të monumenteve të kulturës në Shqipëri pas Luftës së Dytë Botërore. *Phd Thesis, University of Tirana*. Retrieved 1 1, from <https://unitir.edu.al/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Doktoratura-Edlir-Orhani-Fakulteti-i-Histori-Filologjise-Departamenti-i-Arkieologjise-dhe-Trashegimise-Kulturore.pdf>
- Otero-Pailos, J. (2010). *Architecture's Historical Turn: Phenomenology and the Rise of the Postmodern* (NED - New edition ed.). University of Minnesota Press. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5749/j.ctttvtj>
- Pane, R. (1964). Teoria della conservazione e del restauro dei monumenti. *Napoli Nobilissima, Rivista di arti figurative, archeologia e urbanistica IV (I-II)*, 69-761. <http://www.napolinobilissima.net/archivio/>
- Papa, M. (1972a). Mbrojtja ligjore e pasurive kulturore në vendin tonë. *Monumentet*, 1972/3, 139-145.
- Papa, M. (1972b). Mbrojtja ligjore e pasurive kulturore në vendin tonë. *Monumentet*, 3(2).
- Papa, M. (1972/3). Mbrojtja ligjore e pasurive kulturore në vendin tonë. *Monumentet*, 139-145.
- Pereira Roders, A., & Bandarin, F. (Eds.). (2019). *Reshaping Urban Conservation: The Historic Urban Landscape Approach in Action* (Vol. 2). Springer Nature. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-8887-2>
- Petrescu, I. M. (2023). Probleme privind protejarea patrimoniului cultural imobil în legislația de specialitate și documentațiile de urbanism. *Historia Urbana*, 31(31), 151-168.
- Pevsner, N. (2005). *Pioneers of modern design: from William Morris to Walter Gropius*. Yale University Press.
- Plyku Demaj, M., & Buka, I. (2024). Revisiting Durrës, A Critical analysis on the existence of

Durrës Historic Centre. ICTPW-International Conference of Tirana Planning Week-Book of Proceedings,

Pugin, A. W. N. (1898). *Contrasts or, A parallel between the noble edifices of the middle ages, and corresponding buildings of the present day ; shewing the present decay of taste* ([2d ed.]. John Grant. <http://purl.oclc.org/DLF/benchrepro0212>

<https://archive.org/details/contrastsorparal00pugi>

<http://catalog.hathitrust.org/api/volumes/oclc/6523382.html>

Purini, E. F. (2000). *Comporre L'Architettura*. <https://www.laterza.it/scheda-libro/>

<https://www.laterza.it/scheda-libro/?isbn=9788842061540>

Rey-Pérez, J., & Pereira Roders, A. (2020). Historic urban landscape: A systematic review, eight years after the adoption of the HUL approach. *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development*, 10(3), 233-258.

Rickert, Y. (2012). Une célébration du roi? Pierre Patte et ses Monuments érigés en France à la gloire de Louis XV [Dossier]. *Les Cahiers des Framespa*. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4000/framespa.1842>

Riegl, A. (1903). *The Modern Cult of Monuments*.

Riza, E. (2002). *Teoria dhe praktika e restaurimit të monumenteve të arkitekturës*. Instituti i Monumenteve të Kulturës.

Roberts, B. H. (2015). The third industrial revolution: Implications for planning cities and regions. *Work. Pap. Urban Front*, 1(1), 1-21.

Rossi, A. (1982). *The Architecture of the City*. MIT Press. <https://mitpress.mit.edu/9780262680431/the-architecture-of-the-city/>

<https://metropolisbookshop.com.au/p/theory-and-history-the-architecture-of-the-city>

Rowe, C. (1994). *Architecture of good intentions: towards a possible retrospect*. Academy Editions.

Rowe, K., & Koetter, F. (1978). *Collage City*. MIT Press.

RUDERMAN. (1574). *Duperac, Etienne - Urbis Romae Sciographia Ex Antiquis Monumentis Accuratiss Delineata* raremaps.com. <https://raremaps.com/gallery/detail/74291>

Sakellariadi, A. (2013). Strategic participatory planning in archaeological management in Greece: The Philippi management plan for nomination to UNESCO's World Heritage List. *Conservation and Management of Archaeological Sites*, 15(1), 13-29.

Sallaku, P. (2020). *Zhvillimet demografike në Bashkinë Krujë* University of Tirana].

Schlee, M. B. (2017). The role of buffer zones in Rio de Janeiro urban landscape protection. *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development*, 7(4), 381-406.

Schumacher, T. (1971). Contextualism. Urban Ideals and Deformation. *Casa bella*(359), 78-86.

Shkreli, A. (2000). Editorial. *Monumentet 1992-1999*, 10.

Sitte, C. (1945). *The art of building cities: city building according to its artistic fundamentals*. Ravenio Books.

Stovel, H. (2019). Origins and influence of the Nara document on authenticity.

Strazimiri, G. (1971). Rezultatet dhe perspektivat e punës kërkimore restauruese. *Monumentet 1971/1*, 13.

Tafari, M. (1970). *Teorie e storia dell'architettura*. Laterza.

- The city council, B. (2012). *Bruges World Heritage Property, Management Plan - Synopsis*. Retrieved from <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/996/documents/>
- The city of Rome. (2024 - 2030). *Management plan* Retrieved from <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/91/documents/>
- Thomo, P. (2025). *Praktika vlerësimi të Monumenteve* 1. Berk.
- Thomo, P., & Riza, E. (1983). Kriteria dhe metoda për gjurmimin dhe vënien në mbrojtje të ndërtimeve popullore në R.P.S.SH. *Monumentet* 1983/1, 5-17.
- Tschumi, B. (1996). *Architecture and Disjunction*. MIT Press.
- Tschumi, B. (1998). The Architectural Paradox (1975) revised in *Architecture and Disjunction* (1994). In *The Architectural Theory since 1968* (pp. 218-227). MIT Press.
- Tsenkova, S. (2014). Planning trajectories in post-socialist cities: Patterns of divergence and change. *Urban Research & Practice*, 7(3), 278–301.
- Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, (1977). <https://whc.unesco.org/archive/out/opgu77.htm>
- Revised Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, (1980). <https://whc.unesco.org/document/1586>
- UNESCO. (2005). *Vienna Memorandum on World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture - Managing the Historic Urban Landscape*.
- UNESCO World Heritage, C. (2005, 2008). *Nomination Dossier "Historic Centres of Gjirokastra and Berat", Serial Property*. UNESCO World Heritage List: UNESCO World Heritage Centre Retrieved from <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/569/documents/>
- UNESCO World Heritage, C. (2007). *World Heritage. Challenges for the Millennium*
Paris: UNESCO
- UNESCO World Heritage, C. (2011). *The UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape*
Retrieved from <https://whc.unesco.org/en/hul/>
- University of Zagreb, F. o. A. (2021). *Management plan of the UNESCO Heritage Site of the old city of Dubrovnik*. Institute for the restoration of Dubrovnik Retrieved from https://zod.hr/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/PLAN_UPRAVLJANJA_ENG_za-web1.pdf
- Valenti, G. M., & Romor, J. (2019). Leon Battista Alberti and the survey of the walls of Rome. *diségno*, 4, 103-114.
- Vanhuele, N., & Vanneste, D. (2025). How Significant Are Buffer Zones for Tourism at Urban UNESCO World Heritage Sites? *Heritage*, 8(3), 105. <https://www.mdpi.com/2571-9408/8/3/105>
- Veldpaus, L., & RODERS, A. P. (2013). Historic urban landscapes. PLEA,
- Velo, M. (2008). *Tirana: Arkitekturë & Konkurse II. Sheshi Skënderbej = Tirana: architecture & competitions II. Scanderbeg Square*. Botimet Toena.
- Venturi, R. (1977). *Complexity and contradiction in architecture* (Vol. 1). The Museum of modern art.
- Winkler, T. (2021). Vienna's Ringstrasse: a spatial manifestation of sociopolitical values. *Journal of Planning History*, 20(3), 269-286.
- Wittkower, R. (1971). *Architectural principles in the age of humanism*. Norton and Alec Tiranti LTD.
- World Heritage Centre, U. (1979). *Nomination File of the World Heritage Site "Old City of*

- Dubrovnik, Croatia*". World Heritage List: UNESCO Retrieved from <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/95/>
- World Heritage Centre, U. (1980a). *Nomination file for Historic Centre of Rome, the Properties of the Holy See in that City Enjoying Extraterritorial Rights and San Paolo Fuori le Mura*. Retrieved from <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/91/documents/>
- World Heritage Centre, U. (1980b). *Nomination file of the Historic Centre of Warsaw, World Heritage Centre*. Retrieved from <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/30/documents/>
- World Heritage Centre, U. (1991). *Nomination file of the World Heritage Property "Paris, Banks of the Seine"*. World Heritage List: Unesco Retrieved from <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/600/documents/>
- World Heritage Centre, U. (1995). *Nomination File of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh, World Heritage Property*. Retrieved from <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/728/documents/>
- World Heritage Centre, U. (2005). Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. <https://whc.unesco.org/archive/opguide05-en.pdf>
- World Heritage Centre, U., & ICOMOS. (2010). *Joint Reactive Monitoring Mission Report to the Historic Centre of Brugge, Belgium*
- World Heritage Committee, U. (2025). *Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention*. Retrieved from <https://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/>
- Wright, F. L. (1975). *In the cause of architecture*. Architectural record New York. <https://www.architecturalrecord.com/ext/resources/news/2016/01-Jan/InTheCause/Frank-Lloyd-Wright-In-the-Cause-of-Architecture-March-1908.pdf>
- Zhang, J., Xiong, K., Liu, Z., & He, L. (2022). Research progress on world natural heritage conservation: its buffer zones and the implications. *Heritage Science*, 10(1), 102.
- Zucconi, G. (2014). Gustavo Giovannoni: A theory and a practice of urban conservation. *Change Over Time*, 4(1), 76-91.