

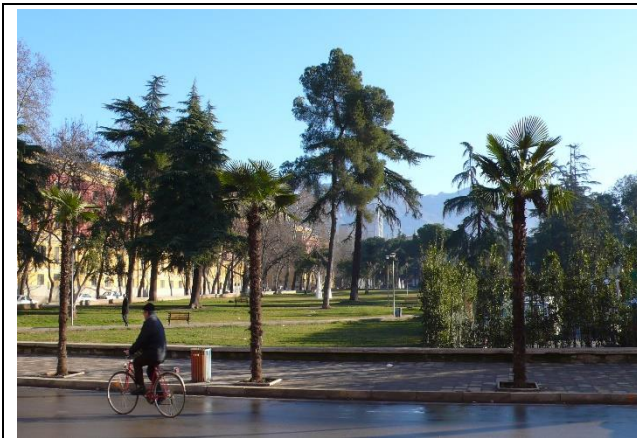
Public Spaces in the Focus of Citizen's Right - Case Study – Urban Spaces Tirana

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Abstract

Syndrome of built environment and civil perception. *The article pays attention to solving the problems of natural environments, as well as altered and/or artificial ones taking Tirana as a case study. It reviews the application of practical solutions to everyday problems of environment, where theory, research and application are integrated, but mostly using their unification as the eclectic model in order to show the interaction between man and environment. The article reviews the way we are a product of our environment, our biology or the interaction of both. It shares the way we are affected by physical environment, such as noise and built environment. In addition, it also examines the way we may modify our environment through design principles, such as aesthetics, and the way we change our environment, when we disregard the impact that people and/or elements have in our ecological system. It provides ideas on the impact of micro and macro-environment of Tirana metropolis, including their short-term and long-term effects. Firstly, a historical context is provided and central methods of discipline research are presented. Then, its is presented the position of environment in Tirana, the values, ethics and principles that apply to environmental assessment, models of perception and knowledge, including the way we process and maintain environmental information, and the main theories of man-environment interaction. Then, a variety of environmental impacts, such as: noise, urban design, urban construction (including pollution effects), collection (overpopulation) and city life are examined, as well as the way they influence us. In the end, considerations are given on*



Beautiful indeed.

the way that these principles of psychology may be applied at home, in institutions (i.e. schools), at work and at leisure premises, by concluding with the concepts of the way we may change our attitude which harms environment¹.

Keywords: Public Spaces, Citizen's Right, Urban Spaces, Tirana

INTRODUCTION

A clean and healthy environment is a part and a parcel of prosperity and quality of life which we want for ourselves now and for our children in the future. The stairs we climb and descend each passing day in block, the paths of the house, the schoolyard, the green areas beyond the

town, etc., need love and care from us, so that environment becomes what we want it to be, with clean air, healthy food, shifted into welcoming space for our civic coexistence. Environmental protection which is presented to us with changes and chances is not only an aspiration of people in order to live in a clean and healthy environment, but we need to know that the costs and the other damages caused by pollution and climate change are considerable.

¹ March 2010, Marin Barleti publishing, Prof. Asc. Sazan Guri, Environmental Science and its basis.

If you the capital of Albania today in Blloku area, in the downtown and everywhere else, you get astonished with the huge buildings, heavy and large, which have been constructed recently. Beautiful designs of collective buildings, such as Twin Towers, Vodafone Tower, night clubs in Blloku area, luxurious hotels, 10-13 storey buildings in the main roads, if you analyze the urban and environmental cost they produce, it may be stated that separately they are designs in the proper level, but in communion they have no urban cohesion.

It is sufficient a day in terrain to visit neighbourhoods, it is sufficient to observe with an observant eye the groups of buildings, it is sufficient to research with the mind of an expert the residential complexes internally and immediately you will understand that Tirana looks like a huge urban village, pityingly you will accept that Tirana has been developed in constructions, but not according to a stable development, which obliges you to call such works rather fatalities than actual works. Here are the results of indifference from the relevant institutions, but also from the citizen who day after day feel the dust layers, which have been cemented in their lungs and again we continue altogether to destroy the city and ourselves¹.

At a time when Tirana in the eve of the '90s, was classified as a graceful European city, with quiet square construction blocks (former blloku), with neighbourhoods with characteristic elitary villas (surrounding RTVSH), with low blocks of flats arranged with the intuition of the geometer architects of that time (Shallvaret, Pallatet Agimi), with neighbourhoods with typical Tirana houses (Kodra e Kuqe), up to lagjia Vakëf with adobe houses (Varri i Bamit), with roads that have not changed for 200 years (the Great Boulevard). Hence, a city which used to be dominated by greenery comparable with Berlin, where each Tirana resident had 15m² greenery. But, where is Tirana heading today? Each resident of of Tirana inhales officially 49 kg of dust per year or half a glass per day; each resident inhales 10,000 liters of air, which he believes it is clean, we live in a city where dust has little air, we receive water in portions yet, while the others in other countries drink beer, after we face with policies on air that kill 300 people each year². The fact of the World Health Organization state that there are 4300 additional tumor cases per year, 600 new cases with tuberculosis each year, for 8 persons-women awaiting daily death from breast cancer. Maybe we have neighbourhoods such as Komuna e Parisit with a population density of 1,500 residents/ha and may the so-called lake of Tirana is turning into a huge pool. Nowadays the downtown of Tirana is being served otherwise. Air per hectare – constant quantity which means that such oxugen is not proportionated for maximum 100 people/ha. Several figures which lead to this situation:

Urbanization – public space ratios

• Tirana city area	40,000,000 m ²
• Park area	100.000 m ²
• Sport terrain area	100,000 m ²
• Leisure area approximately	100,000 m ²
• Project (design) area	700,000 m ²
• Forest area	1,000,000 m ²

Urbanization – public space ratios

Public space – urban space ratio	1,3 % (Tirana, city)
Green space – urban space ratio	0,5 % (Tirana, city)
Public space – urban space ratio	5,2% (Tirana, including forest)

Our concern

¹ March 2010, Marin Barleti publishing Prof. Asc.Sazan Guri, Environmental Right (Albanian Environmental Legislation In Comparison To The European Legislation).

² June 2008, Marin Barleti publishing, Prof. Asc. Sazan Guri, Environmental Analysis In Urban Works .

There is no ratio between land and construction,

There are no stipulated areas with low density, clean residential areas, common areas, mixed areas, village areas, central area,

There is no ratio between public spaces and concrete areas;

There is no ratio between green areas and grey areas;

There may not and there should be no urban pressure in the areas with high ecological values and national importance;

There may not and there should be no urban pressure in area of ecological crowns and national importance.



SITUATION

Uncontrolled human activity that is bringing negative changes to our natural environment, in the conditions of deterioration of biological factors in water, air and land and its physico-chemical composition, as well as institutional apathy in the field of environmental protection, which can cause irreversible consequences, brings to our joint attention the need to say "STOP" to the misuse of land and ecological values that are threatening urban environment, simultaneously the health of residents in the city of Tirana¹.

Albania and Tirana seem to suffer from a nasty social phenomenon, which is not the only case for the country, but that is more serious than in many other countries. From the political viewpoint, this may be called as "lack of respect for the law". More specifically, it should be understood that it is a dangerous selfishness and anti-social behavior towards the people who are not familiar with each other. Albanians are hospitable, friendly people, and this is noticed immediately in the first presentation with them, but their goal is an old Mercedes, big and with oil, which are anti-social consumers of the road space and air pollutants that absorb their fellow citizens. These cars prefer to go through the pedestrian crossing places, may park on pavements, including pedestrians in traffic. They build buildings very few centimeters far from their neighbor, hindering the view and light. The works in the buildings start at 6am on Sunday or listen to loud music at home or late at night, unreasonably argue with other drivers and spit in public places, such a disgusting and non-hygienic gesture, which is known to contribute to the distribution of diseases. Cops drive cars even though the red traffic light sign, challenging the compliance with the rules by other drivers. These features make the Albanian cities such as Tirana and Durres be unpopular and un-civilized, too.

TERRITORY STATUS

The Urban Study of this area was approved with the decision of the CTR of the Municipal Council, No. 81, dated 29.12.2007, based on the previous decision No. 4, dated 21.11.2006 of the CTRRA. This study will orient the development of this area towards a second urban centre for the metropolis Tirana. It includes the zone near the lake, planning a urban infrastructure, whose priority is the urban development, preserving as efficiently as possible the typical natural assets of this area. Even though the essential principle of the project is the stable development of the area, it has not been designed in harmony with the surrounding, because the fundamental condition for a stable urban development in this area is the necessary support on the principles and the orientations of the Sectoral Strategy for the development of the urban spaces, respecting rigorously the natural surrounding and the biodiversity of the region, preventing the damages and the destruction of the natural habitats, which are very important. The respective territory has got a special status for some specific sectors and it is included in the forest fund².



¹ June 2008, Marin Barleti publishing, Prof. Asc. Sazan Guri, Urban Violations in Tirana.

² February 2008, Marin Barleti publishing, Prof. Asc. Sazan Guri, Tirana, disaster or calamity

THE RECOGNITION AND THE STUDY OF THE BASIC OPTIMAL PARAMETRES TO LIVE

The recognition and the study of the basic parametres, which provide the appropriate space to a citizen to live in optimal conditions in a residential group, in a residential block, in a residential complex and in a residential neighbourhood, highlighting the construction coefficients, the construction intensity, the coefficient of the green areas (m²/inhabitant), etc. constitute the necessity or the first step towards a study which focuses on the probable cases of urban offences in a specific city. Of course, in order for a city to function effectively, its constitutional actors and parts are important, without excluding even the specific economic, social, ecological, cultural policies, where all the actors act in harmony with each other.

Therefore, the city is a wide concept

The urban panning of a certain area in transition

The urban planning is a synthesis and a consequence of the analysis in some different disciplines, such as:

- social, economic, historic and ecological disciplines.
- In the respective case, we notice:
- the violation of the social sphere, where the public surface of the citizens of Tirana is reduced from their living style.
- the damage of the region history, which symbolizes another DNA or a DNA which is in opposition with the urbanization, such as the cases near the centre of Tirana, near the dam at the lake, near the zoo, near the forest, near the botanic garden, etc.;
- the ecological influence, which causes urban pressure on all the above-mentioned zones.

Drafting such urban long-term plans requires:

- qualified environmental analysis, which cannot be provided in the relevant case;
- a long-term prognosis about the demographic, economic and social development.

The relevant project does not change a lot from the other ones carried out so far by individuals or groups of individuals up to a state level, which have caused negative phenomena in the country, in some cases even with serious urban, environmental, economic and social consequences, settling irrevocably populations in constructions without permissions, in some areas which:

- were not studied for urbanization,
- lack an engineering infrastructure,
- are part of the public territories,
- include rivers and lakes,
- have natural and historic values, etc.



No further than yesterday, like many other cities in the country which experienced these situations gravely, even Tirana was not prepared to cope with this movement and this new urban development. What about today?! Until yesterday, there was:

- a confusion of the data and information provided by different projects and programmes,
- a lack of the specialists trained with the contemporary concepts in the area of the urban planning.
- a lack of the participation of the citizens in the drafting and approval of the urban studies. **What about today?!**

Urban diversity, a new model of Tirana

Therefore, the drafting of the new general regulatory plans requires:

- a full inventory of information,
- analysis and prognosis with the new contemporary concepts,
- a relatively long period of time at the disposal of the public to participate in order to be informed, until the citizens' consciousness is created so that they are able to make such decisions.

Therefore, governing is the art which makes the locomotive-city work, regardless the political differences and the bureaucratic and arbitrary limitations, which requires:

- leadership, imagination, flexibility, community participation, the involvement of the expert and the negotiation abilities¹.

Nowadays, among the urban strategies worldwide, the **Stable Development** is classified as a life jacket. It has to be considered as the philosophy of the generations, where the first one fulfils its own necessities for a living without spoiling the opportunities and the pleasures the other generation has to get. Therefore, the complete stability of this development would require the efficient preservation and development of three main potential components: the social, economic and ecological components.

THE RECOGNITION AND THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE NEIGHBOURHOODS IN TIRANA BASED ON THE IMPORTANCE AND THE VALUE OF THE AREA

The recognition and the classification of the neighbourhoods of Tirana based on the importance and the value of the zone pursuant to the cultural, historic, touristic landscape, environmental, industrial commercial developments, firstly highlighting the construction areas, whether it is a rural area, central area, a clean residential areas, a mixed residential area, a business area, an industrial area, a preserved area, a management area, and specifying the permitted functions for each of them; all these factors constitute the fundamental condition for the planning of every territory despite its space at a commune, municipality, country or continent level².

The urban development of Tirana, which reached the highest peak of the GDP of country during the years 2002-2008, has required a Urban Plan for a long time, which was achieved by the end of the year 2008. Despite the boom in constructions, which were based on some special projects up to some partial studies, it was found that the neighbourhoods in Tirana have not been recognized and classified based on the value and on the importance of the zone in compliance with the cultural, historic, touristic landscape development, due to the fact that the construction of an entire complex at the hilly area near the botanic garden, is a typical Albanian case, where some constructions similar to palaces overlook the sunrise, meanwhile some other constructions similar to huts cannot see even the sunset, some villas are hidden after the several-storey flats, meanwhile some constructions similar to carcasses conquer the entire area where the poor creatures of the wildlife live.

¹ October 13 -14, 2009, Prof. Asc. Sazan Guri, Air pollution and urban planning in Tirana (Scientific Referee)

International Conference, Tirana

² Tirana 2011, Demography Magazine, Prof. Asc. Sazan Guri, Marianthi Guri, Thoughts about building and urban in Tirana, page 4

However, they share one common feature: they are all constructed on a tectonic-seismic zone, causing not only insecurity and fear but even urban pollution and why not even psychological, physical, visual pollution up to a grotesque sensation, where the children of the palaces, of the huts, villas and flats wake up and go to bed accompanied with the roar of the lions, wolves, jackals and of many other animals. Is there a similar case in the world where the architects and the decision-makers play games with the laws of nature. These grotesque spectacles of the superposition of the projects with different urban functions would not occur if there was a classification of the urban areas which possess the respective permitted functions such as:

1. The development area

These area would include the regions where the construction in compliance with the contemporary parametres would be encouraged, creating the necessary spaces for all the kinds of the activities and of the functions which are expected to be involved in it, such as multi-family buildings, education institutions, supermarkets which might be separated, attached to or integrated in other objects, restaurants, bars, cafés, offices and administrative institutions, theatres, cinemas, cult buildings, buildings with a recreational character, an area for temporary car parking, underground garages, parks and squares, temporary halls for exhibitions and fairs, etc.

2. Management area

The management areas are supposed to be those regions where interferences in the existing zones are accepted in order to increase the density and the improvement of the living conditions of the citizens. These areas will develop after the assessment of the residential objects and complexes with special values, interfering very carefully an only through the urban studies in the free spaces, reassessing the degraded areas and the ones without any special values for the city, permitting the buildings such as one-family constructions (for example: 1 to 3-storey villas), schools, etc.

3. Conservation area

These areas include the characteristic, city-formatting, historic, cultural, environmental, picturesque and touristic zones of the city. In these areas, no construction permits can be given for the objects and structures which spoil the identity of the area. The existing objects of the zone might be rehabilitated only in their interior part, without damaging their volume, façades and their special architectonic elements. The permission is issued only in the following cases: They have to be one-family buildings, with *permitted functions* such as parks and squares (relaxation spaces, preserving and cultivating the green areas), protected landscapes, places with recreational character (boats, canoe, fishing and camping with the respective services), fountains and water mirrors, sculptures and monuments, parks, zoos, temporary service objects (only with a special permit and with a continuous supervision from the municipality)¹.

4. The industrial area

Constructions with the following functions should be permitted in the industrial area: bakery shops, enterprises of food processing, warehouses and other premises for the trading of fruits and vegetables, clothes factories, enterprises where furniture is manufactured, etc. Under these circumstances, the area near the Lake and the neighbourhoods of many other urban areas in Tirana are not recognized and classified based on the importance and the value of the area in compliance with the cultural, historic, picturesque-touristic, environmental, industrial and touristic development, therefore we are in the middle of a chaos and where their existing values are exchanged with their urban character (the case of the centre of Tirana

¹ April 2006, G & Ggroup, 2k Group, Environmental Ministry, The Eia Report And Social Impact For The Urban Master Plan In Ex Chemic Block In Tirana.

and of the centre 2 of Tirana). After the request for the transformation from a sportive zone to a residential zone, the Council of the Territory Regulation of the Republic, with the decision no. 4, dated 21.11.2006, passed the change in the Regulatory Plan of Tirana regarding the functional zoning, for the area in the street "Margarita Tutulani", "Sami Frasher" and in the north-western part of the Dam of the Artificial Lake (zone C1 and C2) from a "sportive zone", according to the Regulatory Plan, into "a residential area". Pursuant to the respective decisions of the Municipality and of the CTRRA, the following is the current division for urban construction:

1. The residential area, which lies in the north-eastern part and in the south-western part, in both sides of the pine area (**zone C1 and C2**) shall be treated as a residential area with residential buildings. The objects of the residential area will be multifunctional. Commercial and residential premises will be in these buildings. The first floors of the residential buildings are projected to have multifunctional character, for commercial and social activities. The residential objects shall be projected pursuant to all the urban norms. Streets for the service of the fire engines and of the emergencies will be provisioned in the residential area. The construction intensity varies from the value 2.5-3.

2. The multifunctional object (zone C1/a) whose destination is a cultural administrative and sportive zone, which is located in the south-western part. The multifunctional object shall include different activities which generate working positions, for example: a centre for fairs and conferences, art galleries, cinemas, theatres, an opera house, sport halls, restaurants, etc. It will be a strategic point with activities not only for the surrounding area but for the entire city of Tirana. The ground floors of the multifunctional object will be connected with the other part of the residential object, with underpassings and pedestrian areas, which will be treated as special elements with a contemporary architecture. As the multifunctional object is close to the Artificial Lake, an architectonic connection with the dam of the lake has been considered, in order for this connection to be used as a boulevard and the inhabitants of Tirana can use this part of their city as a recreational area which offers several activities¹.

3. Zone C2. This area needs a urban development which involves a mix residential and commercial character of the area; the layout of the urban network of the entire area and the introduction to the new standards, creating new urban places, as well as the introduction to the objects with a cultural and recreational character. The zone will be developed as a modern multifunctional centre with contemporary standards, or as a commercial, recreational and residential centre, intermingling the multifunctional spaces with the green areas of the Public Park, with residential towers, with a height of 13-22 floors and with a high tower up to 33 floors and with a big recreational park in the function of the residential towers.

4.

5. The area of "Garda" and of the Park of Tirana (zone C3). The construction of the residential objects based on a typical architectonic project will transform this area into a residential complex, connecting it with the existing part of the city. Its position close to the National Park created a direct connection of man with nature. The part of the park near Garda is thought to remain a green area (check the functional zoning). **Zone C5.** This zone up to the ring road will have a residential character with residence intensity 2.5-3. **Zone C4** and the area above the ring road of the zone C5 will be a residential area with a lower residential intensity. The maximal height of the objects will be 3+1. The underground parking spaces throughout the area lie on the entire surface of the property, avoiding the access through the secondary roads of the parking block. The number of the parking posts in this floor shall be in proportion with the number of the inhabitants. There shall also be parking posts for the people who will visit the multifunctional premises (the floors with commercial functions). The development of the area through the Lake of Tirana, based on the project, means its revitalization including even the dam



¹ January - May 2009, G & GRegional, Environmental Ministry, Eia on the study of geological, geotechnical and hydrogeological on the administrative area of bërzhit comune and social impact.

of the lake and the preservation of the development balances, giving priorities to the infrastructure which will fulfill the needs of the community¹.

THE IDENTIFICATION ON TERRAIN OF THE URBAN CONSTRUCTION MISMATCHES IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE RULES OF THE CITY PLANNING

Even today, the Municipality gives land for construction but not sites prepared for construction. Which are the reasons that in most of the cases the norms of the city planning rules are not respected during the constructions? Who is responsible for the creation of the infrastructure of the construction site? Do the construction companies or the Municipality have to do this thing? At the moment, in our capital city, all the investors who buy a construction site pay for projects which in most of the cases have not been studied from the city planning perspective, and not only. The construction number during the last five years has rocketed. This is shown by the fact that the previous utility poles, result to be in the middle of the streets these days. Having constructed the block of flats, it is found that there is no free space or a pavement to put the pole. Also, in the boulevard "Gjergj Fishta", there are still buildings positioned in the middle of the bank of Lana River. There are still degraded sites and zones covered with rubbish and nobody notices it².

The minimal distance of the buildings or of the objects from the side of the street is less than 5 metres, for streets whose width is up to 7m, not less than 7.5m for streets whose width is 7-15m, and not less than 10m for streets whose width is more than 15m (refer to the photos of the street "Komuna e Parisit"). Pursuant to this part of the rules, taking into consideration even the surveys, we can say that almost everywhere in the residential territories (group, residential block or complex), there are no respective surfaces square metre/inhabitant for the constitutional elements, such as playgrounds for children, surfaces for social objects, surfaces for sportive terrains, organized green areas (parks), streets and squares among the blocks. According to this part of the rules and even to the studies, we can say that almost in all the above mentioned elements which serve for public services, there is no parking service because the public spaces are occupied. On the contrary, the blocks of flats inside the big ring road, particularly the ones with very expensive and with the so called luxurious flats, offer spectacles, with dramatic consequences sometimes, every morning and evening, due to the narrow entrances in the parking spaces. Pursuant to this part of the rules and even to the surveys, we can say that the green areas in the residential area have been substituted with urban works, taking to a trough the standard regulated by the law, meanwhile the green area in the residential complexes is just a zone similar to a park, with few trees and a little greenness, mostly covered with pebbles and with an infertile land.



Regarding the local parks, it can be said that the ecological balance of approximately 450,000 new residences in Tirana was supposed to have been located on a surface of 7,500 hectares, or the other ecological balance, which determined two trees per inhabitant, nowadays has two change with six trees per inhabitant due to the urban life we live. Regarding this element of the public space, we can say that in Tirana there is an increase of the mini-football pitches or of the terrains for

¹ June – November 2009, G & G Vora Municipal, Environmental Ministry Vora, Municipality Preza Comm. Preza Comm, Bërxull Comm., "Eia on the study of geological, geotechnical and hydrogeological on administrative area of vora and preza and social impact".

² 009, Environmental Ministry, G & Ggroup, Eia for the sportive complex in the bubq village and social impact, Bubq

the organization of the sportive games. However, they are not sufficient compared with the current number of the population. In some other cases, due to the international laws, some sportive areas, which are even private, such as the annex of the Stadium "Dinamo", are preserved. According to the survey carried out in the city, it is found that every citizen of Tirana might encounter every day, throughout his life, the violation of this rule, in more than 80% of the new blocks of flats constructed in these last 6-7 years. For example: the 12-floor buildings, which are supposed to be 26m or 30m away from each other, actually are no more than 3-4m away from each other. New blocks of flats are still being constructed. If we refer to their beautiful computerized designs, they pretend to be surrounded with public and green spaces. However, the truth is that they do not have any surrounding free spaces, as they have exploited the entire area for construction, and they do not have even a pavement for the pedestrians. The separating space among them is inconsiderate compared with the number of their floors. In some cases, these buildings have been constructed at the side of the pavements and extend beyond their limits. This fact is not taken into consideration during the calculation of the space among the buildings or from the building to the pavement¹.

With regard to the console parts of the buildings, there is a law in the city planning rules, which stipulates that: If a building has console parts in more than 50% of its entire surface, they are considered construction surface and they will be calculated in the distance among the constructions. According to the studies in the terrain, it was found that in the area of Farka, this rule has not been respected. The consoles of the balconies of all the flats go beyond the line of the pavement. This area has a steep terrain and the balconies are above the heads of the pedestrians, causing troubles for the normal movement along the pavements. These problems do not belong only to Farka, because the situation is even more serious in the internal streets of the city. In the region of Dajti and Farka, more concretely in their horizontal levels, there are buildings which compete against the laws of nature².

The artificial lake of Tirana is facing the threat of self-drowning, of drying and becoming undesirable for most of the people here in Tirana. At the moment, it has the smallest surface covered with water it has ever had, the lowest volume and consequently its most unpleasant view. Previously, it used to give pleasure and grace to the relaxing park of Tirana. We are finding it impossible to know its values, we are not using it for its beneficial features such as for watering, for rinsing and the dilution of the sewage that comes from Lana. Nowadays, it is full of mud and cannot be cleaned; its ways and mechanisms that supply it with water have been blocked, therefore it can realize the function it was designed for in the '50s. The artificial lake or the big park of Tirana constitutes one of the most preserved areas during the riots of the year 1997 and it still is a sportive and spiritual pilgrimage spot for thousands of people, who go there every morning or evening for physical exercises, for relaxation and for cleaning the filter of the lungs which is dirty because of the polluted and dusty air of the city. This place has got this feature due to the perfect combination of the parametres of the forest with the waters of the lake. Even the citizens themselves accept the fact that when they want to relax they go to the lake or the big park. Actually, it is obvious that man goes to that place where the park and the lake live in symbiosis with each other, where he can find spiritual, physical and mental quietness. But what is happening with the lake? The park is not being well-maintained, but this is not the entire situation; it is deteriorating day by day. Unfortunately, almost all the lakes of Albania have degraded in the similar conditions like the lake of Tirana, with just little water, with lots of mud and with destroyed dams. We are demonstrating that we do not have the decision-makers to administer, we do not have the specialist to lead and we do not have employees to maintain the area³. We are giving a new dimension to the destruction of the city through the destruction of the artificial lake. We have to think very carefully before undertaking actions to change or to interfere at the lake, because what these actions have already started to show their consequences. However, the worst is expected to come in the future. Albanian



¹ June - November 2009, Prof. Asc. Sazan Guri, Eia for the bërxull administrative unit, G & GBërxull Comune.

² 2012, Prof. Asc. Sazan Guri Strategic environment assessment report for the urban plan of Tirana

³ 2013, Strategic environment assessment report for the urban plan of Berzhita.

nature is wonderful, with climatic features which have been attempted to be realized artificially by other countries¹. The weather in Albania has the highest amount of the rainfall, increasing the input of the water resources which are represented by several rivers and power plants. We are assisting urban planning in the negative sense. What is occurring at the park and at the hills referred to as the green garland of Tirana? This area does not change a lot from the urban life in Tirana, because it is populated with schools, kindergartens, bars, restaurants, and sometimes people have to avoid the vehicles (more than 100 vehicles pass through the area to go to the school daily), the motorcycles, the fast bikes, and in some cases the air is full of dust, there is rubbish and nowadays there are even high-risen flats located near the green hill. However, they are not in harmony with the quiet life of the animals of the zoo and with the vegetation of the botanic garden. Nowhere else in the world do we find constructions in the national parks and in some special areas of the cities, which are classified as recreational and relaxation spots. In our case, there are constructions without any criteria and the citizens are being deprived from the most minimal conditions of living. There is cement in the city centre, cement in the suburbs, cement in the sandy beaches, cement in the beaches with cliffs, cement in the fields, cement in the hills. City planning does not mean only cement and high-risen buildings. Where are the other elements of the landscape and of the image of the city? Is the overpopulation of the cities the only matter?

Urban construction near the Lake

This is another issue to be discussed. The streets of the city used to be well arranged. Today, there are only old and new flats without any space among them. These happen in the interior part of the residential complexes. The big buildings of 13 floors are positioned just 3 metres away from each other, meanwhile the norm is: for the 12-storey buildings which are next to each other there should be distance no less than 30 metres. In the area of Fraka, which is an expanding zone, all the buildings have 7 floors. So they do not respect the permitted norm, which is 5 floors. The geological formations cannot support these buildings. Even here, the public space is very small². Furthermore, it is an area under construction. So, the municipality continues to permit the construction of other buildings and the rules are not respected. Most of the buildings in the city have 13 floors and they do not have an underground floor.



According to the geological criteria and the stability of the buildings 1/10-1/15 of the height of the building must be under the ground. Is this norm applied in the new buildings? There are electric and telephone cables everywhere in the streets of Tirana. They are in a total disorder. No common solution has been found yet, meanwhile this situation remains threatening for the life of the citizens.

In the boulevard Zhan d'Ark, there are lots of paradoxes such as the extension of the buildings without permission, meanwhile the process of the legalization continues and nobody notices this problem. But where are these extensions classified? Firstly, the most serious issue is the fact that the old blocks of flats have been constructed on the foundations which can support only their initial floors. If other floors are added above, the weight of the building increases and the foundations merge over the time. Also, they are the most unstable and vulnerable buildings during earthquakes and seismic forces. Even the system of the canals is a serious issue for Tirana. If we take into consideration the area near the lake, the region of Farka, it is obvious that it is still under construction and the system of the canals does not function appropriately. However, we cannot justify the fact that the work has started in disorder. Firstly, the canals are dug, the construction site is prepared with the necessary elements and then the work goes on with the foundations of the building continuing with the improvement and the completion of the pipelines in the buildings³.

¹ 2006 - 2008, Haskoni Company, Prof. Asc. Sazan Guri, European Commission, Tirana, The ecological alternatives of the movements in tirana in limit the emissions in the air, social and health impact.

² February 2004, Isis Sh.A., Prof. Asc. Sazan Guri Inertest study and social and helath impact Of Bërzhitë – Tirana terrace

³ March 2004, Prof. Asc. Sazan Guri, M. Guri, Geological-engineering study and the project of river inert career exploitationand social impact, Qedaja – Tirana.

12 QUESTIONS WITH RESPONSES FOR 2200 URBAN VIOLATIONS

1. **To the question, if the congestion (overcrowding) in Tirana** may be called, inter alia, a disaster, we would respond with "Yes", because of the way that the territory was captivated, where today and forever, the Albanian humanity will suffer the syndrome of a bread parcel, a urban building, a green plot a high-rise and a public parcel several-storey buildings.
2. **To the question if Tirana constitutes a metropol**, we would respond with "Yes", but it looks like the phenomenon of metropol in the 60s, where people used to go from rural areas to urban areas, meanwhile today it is happening the contrary (Torino, Milan out of 3 million residents, nowadays 1,2 million are living outside the city). The final conclusion is that for the metropolitan space it does not exist the need of a great expansion in order to reach the accommodation of an increasing population. Through the densification process, the city presently cannot provide new residences in the future.
3. **To the question, if there is any place better than Tirana from the urban viewpoint**, we would respond that all the cities of Albania, with the exception of the economic-cultural life are better than it is, from both the urban and environmental aspect. The former garden area of about 40ha at the former exhibition "Shqipëria Sot", is full of concrete due to the high-rise buildings.
4. **To the question, if the model Tirana with high buildings in the center** may be adapted by other cities as well, we would respond: No, in no way; because we would add up the cities with the unprecedented urban picture, where urban concrete buildings like nowhere else in Europe, exceed the tops of church minarets and mosques in the center.
5. **To the question if Tirana constitutes a bad urban model** we would respond without doubt "Yes", Because, again, it may be the only city in Europe, where in the entrance of blocks, the vehicles cannot enter for the collection of family urban waste;
6. **To the question that due to buildings, how many villas have been destroyed and burnt** we would respond that such an ill-fated case because fashionable that before one constructs with "urban permit" one must bust burn and then build. A villager in Ukraine and Macedonia is poorer, but they care about the State;
7. **To the question if the Franch plan has violated law** we would respond that none of the Western studios, which have completed designs for center 1 and 2 in Tirana has dared to introduce such innovation in the downtown of their countries or any other European countries. We remind you that skyscrapers, even though in a limited number, are beyond Danub in Vienna, beyond from Paris downtown, they are missing in Berlin, Budapest, Prague, etc. Liverpool i.e. is presented with 3 business centers, Tirana with 6-8 centers. They say that French towers do not affect the center of Tirana. Maybe a center for them would be called the Franch Towers, if they would be constructed near the monument of Skanderbeg. On the other side, the center of Tirana is a first-class cultural monument, (The center of Tirana became a cultural monument in 2001), where no internal and external interventions are allowed, however several other imply that the protected area allows for intervention. What about the cultural area of a nation, what about the historical asset of a nation, what about the traditional values of a nation, such as the center of Tirana, do they allow intervention?! hence, Tirana is the model of destruction, starting from its very center;
8. **To the question if Tirana has presented the harmonization of private interests with the public ones**; Common properties have become private properties of politicians.
9. **To the question if Tirana has reflected the lack of urban city planning** and urban expert we would respond that, unfortunately, until today there has been no urban design and no urban planning, where each architect may have modelled separately a work, maybe an excellent urban work, but, in complex or in communion with others have offered a bad model; (Compare the urban works in Golem, Tirana where the coffins are hardly taken out from the blocks, sideways. It is well-known that the Contract for the urban city planning of Tirana has been postponed for three years, when it should have been the basis of construction works since its very beginnings, particularly after 2000 of the construction boom. Presently, the Municipality has approved the regulatory plan, for which voting has taken place in principle, but this plan is similar to the job after the corn. The bad was done. Centuries are required to repair this model *alla shqiptarçe*. In no case in Tirana, in the territory planned for urban construction, has been established underground infrastructure before construction. However, in all the cases, constructions have been made, then destructions in order to realize the underground infrastructure (hyrotechnical, improvements, telephone, etc.). On the other side the regulatory plan of Tirana gives you the feeling of a

plan closer to politicization than to the urban one, where often the greatest politics decides for urban strategies, such as informality formalization;

10. **To the question if Tirana is fed up with buildings** we would respond that it has been excessively fed up, so much as it encourages you to take decisions or at least processes such as Moratorium for stopping such situation, by obliging construction companies for mandatory deviation from construction field for buildings. We can say indeed that we have damaged our nature with our money. Terrible?! Only in the years 1996-1997 we lost 2000ha agricultural land. Today we have more than 20 bread area, 80% of public area, more than 10% green area, more than 90% of sports area.

11. **To the question how tall should the buildings in Tirana be** we can say that Tirana consists of road with a general width of 18-24m. This suggests that building consist of 4 to 6 floors. There are also other strong arguments which show that in Tirana no other very tall buildings be constructed, such as the network of roads cannot deal with the flow of circulation due to such numerous buildings. Usually, the roads consist of two lanes and one lane for parking. For this reason the maximum of the height of buildings should be 6 floors including herein the last floor. This has been applied in many city centers and by the river strip in Tirana, extending in the northwestern part of Tirana up to the industrial area of Bërxull. For example: a path in the old Ottoman roads had 4-6m distance for buildings up to 3 floors. In the area of Yzberisht and Sauk no buildings more than 3 floors should be built.

12. **To the question: what kind of development should Tirana have** we should respond in advance to: what kind of model should Tirana have? *The framework of our capital development should recommend that the city settlements must respond to requests for housing and land use. Given the basic topography such as: lake, hills, mountains, river valleys, plateaus, the existing model and the transport network there can be assessed and identified a preferred option, which combines elements of business with social elements, by simultaneously preserving the natural values.*

CONCLUSION

1. Nga matrica e interpretuar rezulton se opsioni i dendësimit më të madh është zgjidhja më e lehtë, më pak e kushtueshme dhe më pozitive ndaj mjedisit, nëse respektohet trafiku, parkimi, hapësirat e hapura publike, transporti publik, gjithmonë, nëse gjëndet tokë e përshtatshme.
2. Gjithësesi, kjo duhet të jetë qasje afat mesme, që mund të përdoret (10-12 vjet). Më pas, duhet të vazhdohet ose të mbështetet ose të zëvendësohet nga ndoshta një zhvillim i një skaji periferik i qytetit dhe/ose zgjerimi i vendbanimeve të shtrira në periferi, por sipas modelit qytet kopësht.
3. Ndërkohë që fakti në jetën urbane rezulton se opsioni i tejskajshëm i dendësimit ka ofruar zgjidhjen më të vështirë për qytetarët, sepse po rezulton e kushtueshme dhe negative ndaj mjedisit, mbasi u dendësua trafiku, u mbipopullua parkimi, u asgjësuan hapësirat e lira e publike, u dekurajua transporti publik.
4. Nga qasje afat mesme (që mund të përdoret 10-12 vjet), nuk doli as për qasje afatshkurtër.
5. Kështu strategjia për zhvillimin e vendbanimeve të rajonit duhet të bazohet mbi një kombinim të opsionit - A **“Dendësimi”** me një pjesë të opsionit - C **“Zgjerim i madh i një skaji periferik të qytetit të Tiranës.**

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