“SPINE” AS THE CONSTRUCTIVE ELEMENT OF THE CITY: CASE STUDY TIRANA, ALBANIA

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ABSTRACT

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This particular study is about the main boulevard of the city center of Tirana that is the capital of Albania since 1920. The main boulevard, which has a function of a "spine" of the central business district, was designed as an idea by the Italian architects in 1925. The new government needed immediately governmental buildings like ministries, a palace and a strong form that connects all of these facilities together in a monumental way.

This "spinal" circulation system was inspired from the urban movements of that time like linear city and city beautiful movement.

Tirana is studied as the case by the light of historical developments of other cities. The power of the spine and its effect to the macro form of the whole city is analyzed and determined.

Key words: Spine, linear city, city of Tirana, city beautiful, boulevard

ÖZ

YAPISAL KENT ELEMANI OLARAK “OMURGA”- ÖRNEK ÇALIŞMA TİRAN, ARNAVUTLUK

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Bu tez 1920 yılından bu yana Arnavutluk’ta başkent görevi gören Tiran şehrinin ana bulvarı hakkındadır. Bu bulvar 1925 yılında İtalyan mimarlar tarafından tasarlanmış bir merkezi çalışma alanı omurgasıdır. Yeni hükümet ivedilikle bakanlıklar, saray gibi hükümet yapılarına ve bunları birbirine bağlayacak güçlü bir yapıya ihtiyaç duymuştur.

Bu “omurgasal” ulaşım yapısı o zamanların doğrusal şehir, güzel kent gibi kent tasarım hareketlerinden etkilenmiştir.

Tiran, tarihteki benzer şehirlerin ışığında, çalışılmış ve omurganın gücü ve kent makro formu üzerindeki etkisi analiz edilip irdelenmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Omurga, güzel kent, Tiran şehri, doğrusal kent, bulvar

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The “spine” is one of the most powerful constructive elements of urban planning since the time of ancient planners of the cities. Especially in the heart of the city- the center- the monumental spinal movement systems were preferred by most of the decision makers.

Tirana is one of the cities that use that element of the design in its civic center. The scope of this study is to find the reason behind this powerful form? How was it designed and built? And the most important answer that we have to find is that how it resists even in the most chaotic times of the city?

Tirana is a city that was founded by Sulejman Pasha in 1614. However it gained its importance after more than 300 years in 1920 when the Congress of Lushnja declared Tirana the country’s capital. After that, Tirana was in the league of European “modern” capitals. It was needed to be rebuilt and it should be started from the administrative and civic center. The new government had to begin working.

The scope of this thesis is to study the conditions and factors initiated the implementation of the “spine” of the civic center in Tirana from 1920 to 1940. In twenty years, the elements of the “spine”- wide boulevards, public

buildings, monuments and squares- had been constructed and took its final form. Interestingly this form, from the reconstruction activities of the communist egalitarianism, through the chaos of the so called democratic transition period, to the period of capitalization remained structurally unchanged.

The methodology of this thesis is to study this particular form of urban design in a historical background in order to put forward the reasons and the results of using spine in the central movement systems of the cities. That is the way how it might be compared with the evolution of the “spine” of Tirana. By the way, studying the great movements of 19th and 20th century, “Linear City and “City Beautiful Movement” had positive effects for understanding the details of the design.

The development of the two main boulevards and the Skenderbeg Square of Tirana, which shape the “spine” of the city, had three main aspects: political, functional and design. The cities, that have been used “spine” element, gave different meanings to it in different periods, in different cultures.

In the first chapter of this thesis it is studied different cities according to the characteristics of their spines. In the second chapter it is studied the history and the aspects of the spine of Tirana. In the third chapter it is made a compare between Tirana and the other cities. As a conclusion it is also made an evaluation of the spine as a constructive element of urban design.

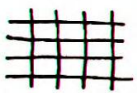
CHAPTER 2

SEARCHING IDEAL FORM OF URBAN DESIGN

Apart from its artistic and professional bases, Urban Design is the study of how cities have achieved their physical form and the process that go into renewing them. Urban design is not merely the art of designing cities, but in cognitive sense how cities grow and change. It is the study of how civilizations have chosen to represent themselves in spatial form, and the process through which specific urban forms come about. Urban design is about the transmission of urban meaning in specific urban forms (Cuthbert, 2006:1).

Every city has a general overall shape. There are several classifications of shape (Spreiregen, 1965:53-54):

Radiocentric: The most frequently found urban form is radiocentric, a large circle with radial corridors of intense development emanating from the center.



Rectilinear: A variation on radiocentric form is rectangle, which usually has two corridors of intense development crossing at

the center. This variant of the radiocentric form is found in small cities rather than larger ones. It is radiocentric form with right angles.

Star: A star shape is a radiocentric form with open spaces between the outreaching corridors of development.

Ring: A ring shape is a city form around large open spaces. The San Francisco Bay is such an open space for the cities of the bay area. A ring and star may be found in combination, particularly where a loop road is built around the outskirts of an expanding metropolis.

Linear: The linear shape is usually the result of natural topography which restricts growth of the result of a transportation spine. Stalingrad in the Soviet Union was planned as a linear city.

Branch: The branch form is a linear spine with connecting arms.

Sheet: A vast urban area with little or no articulation.

Articulated Sheet: The articulated sheet form is accented by one or more central clusters and several sub-clusters.

Constellation: The constellation is a series of nearly equal-size cities in close proximity.

Satellite: The satellite is a constellation of cities around a main center.

All these shapes in fact are derived from one basic shape which is “line”. In the cities that are studied through this chapter, the form of spine is seen regardless to the overall shape of the city.

The form of the city is determined by the multiplicity of decisions made by the people who live in it. How these decisions have occurred in the past, the influence of the circumstances in which they were made, the way in which they have related to one another and to examine the gradually evolving forms they have produced (Bacon, 1967:13).

Given a clear vision of a “design idea”, the multiplicity of wills that constitutes our contemporary democratic process can coalesce into positive, unified action on a scale large enough to change substantially the character of a city (Bacon, 1967:13).

Some great architects and philosophers discussed the evolution of the forms and constructive elements of the cities. Among these Edmund Bacon’s *Design of Cities*, Kevin Lynch’s *A Theory of Good City Form*, and Paul Spreiregen’s *The Architecture of Towns and Cities* are to be referred. They tried to classify these forms within the historical context of urban design.

As it is studied in this work the main boulevard of Tirana; how it was emerged, who designed it, why it was designed as the main element at the center of the new capital and why it remained unchanged even in the most chaotic times. For us, it would be better to discuss the historical background

of that “form” while designing the cities from ancient to the future taking into consider who decided it to build, why it is needed and how it is planned.

Spaces of a city have two main components in terms of forms: On the one hand urban spaces, which usually molded by building facades and the city’s floor; and, on the other, the open spaces which represent nature brought into, and around, the city. Urban spaces can be linear corridors. Avenues and streets are linear urban spaces if they are enclosed on two sides or have some element of unifying character- trees or uniform buildings. Corridor spaces are spaces for linear movement (Spreiregen, 1965:55). By the invention of the path (street) as the common space for circulation- for pedestrians or vehicles- it took different names according to its wideness, function and form: Axial, arcade, arterial, avenue, boulevard, shaft or spinal.

2.1. Definition of the word “spine”

Spine is, briefly, a form that holds a body without bending, straight. In other words, spine binds a whole form of body from head to tail as the main support of it.

The backbone of a vertebrate animal which provides the main support for its body; any rigid, pointed outgrowth on the body of an animal, as the quills of a porcupine or the fin rays of a fish; a thorn like, slightly woody structure, as on a plant or tree; a long narrow projection or outcropping, as of rock, or a crest of ridge of mountains or hills (The New Grolier Webster, 1975:938).

Although in the most definitions of spine, it refers to the backbone of a living creature, human beings, an animal or a plant, the meaning of word “spine” or “backbone” has been used figuratively for almost every formation that keeps the macro form of a system together.

n **spine** [spain]: The line of linked bones running down the back of humans and many animals; the backbone. Something like a backbone in shape or function. A thin, stiff, pointed part growing on an animal or a plant.

adj **spinal:** Of or concerned with the backbone a spinal injury.

adj **spineless:** Of an animal, having no spine; invertebrate. Of a person, having a weak character; easily dominated.

adj **spiny:** Full of, or covered with, spines a spiny cactus (Kernerman, 2006).

In anatomy human spine is taught as: stacked on top of one another in the spine are more than 30 bones, the vertebrae, which together form the spine.

The spinal column is made up of numerous small interconnected bones stacked on top of one another. The spinal bones and their related structures (such as the intervertebral disk, the ligaments, and muscles) work in concert to provide:

- movement,
- balance,
- upright posture,

- protection,
- shock absorption, to an organism.

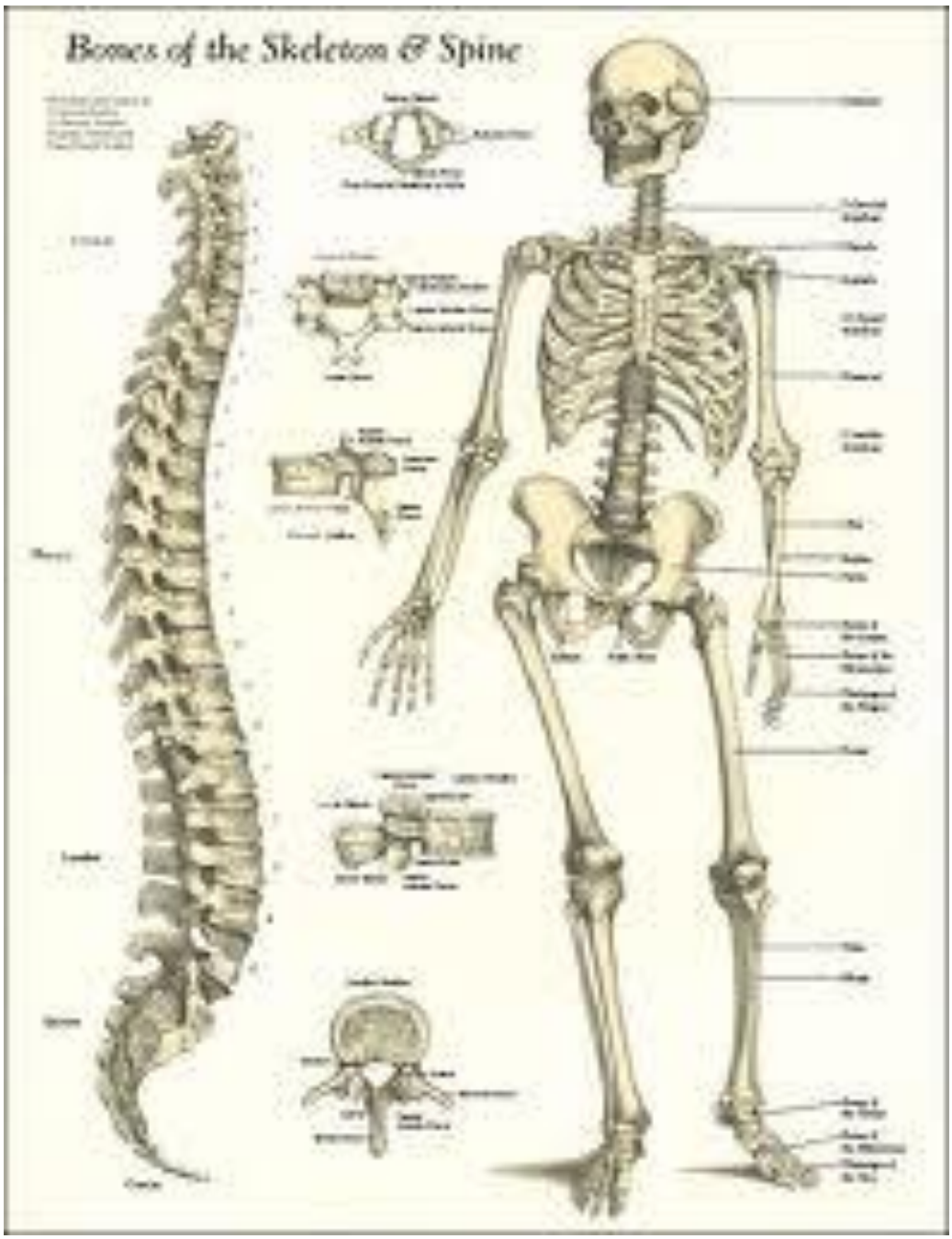


Figure 1. Bones of the Skeleton and Spine

2.2. "Spine" as the constructive element in history

Edmund Bacon wrote on his legendary book, *Design of Cities*: A clearly expressed movement system is a powerful influence, capable of seizing men's minds and developing loyalties around it. Of itself it becomes a major political force (Bacon, 1967:36).

The spinal kinds of movement systems were used very often in the history for the form of cities which always has been the indicator of the state of civilization. Ancient Greek and Roman, Medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque cities' design structures, 18th and 19th Century European design, American cities, Brasilia and the 20th Century capitals with their principals of urban planning which made great efforts to find the ideal form of the cities like "Linear City", and "City Beautiful Movement", used this powerful and handsome constructive element. The appearance of this type of street is a fascinating event in the history of town planning. With the increased prosperity a need arose for the arterial roads within the homogeneous network of streets, and this was achieved by marking them with particularly splendid architectural features (Krier, 1979:21).

2.2.1. Theories of Good City Form[i]

The Greeks had created an urban form made for people who lived in it. The Romans built upon their theories but not without discarding some of Greece's most important urban ideals. In medieval times ideas parallel to those of ancient Greece found a new expression. Again these more human concepts were discarded by the Renaissance, whose aims were loftier and of considerable artistic quality. The design of cities in the Renaissance had been an instrument of state control. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it became a technique for greedy speculation. At the same time, however, a new breed of design theorists entered the scene. Sometimes their thinking was quite practical; sometimes it was utopian. Sometimes it relied on extravagant mechanical inventions. Sometimes it rejected all semblances of engineering technology as unnecessary, proposing instead a return to nature. But all of these ideas strove toward one objective: the design of cities as a place to live for all, with particular emphasis on the needs of the working classes (Spreiregen, 1965:29).

[i] The name of this chapter is derived from the name of well-known book of Kevin Lynch.

2.2.1.1. Linear City

In the nineteenth century, mechanical inventions grasped the imagination of many designers, as they still do to a large extent. The Spanish businessman and engineer Don Arturo Soria y Mata was of such a mind. He had created Madrid's first streetcar and telephone system. In 1882 he suggested the idea of *La Ciudad Lineal,* or the "Linear City", in which he proposed that the logic of linear utility lines should be the basis of all city layouts.

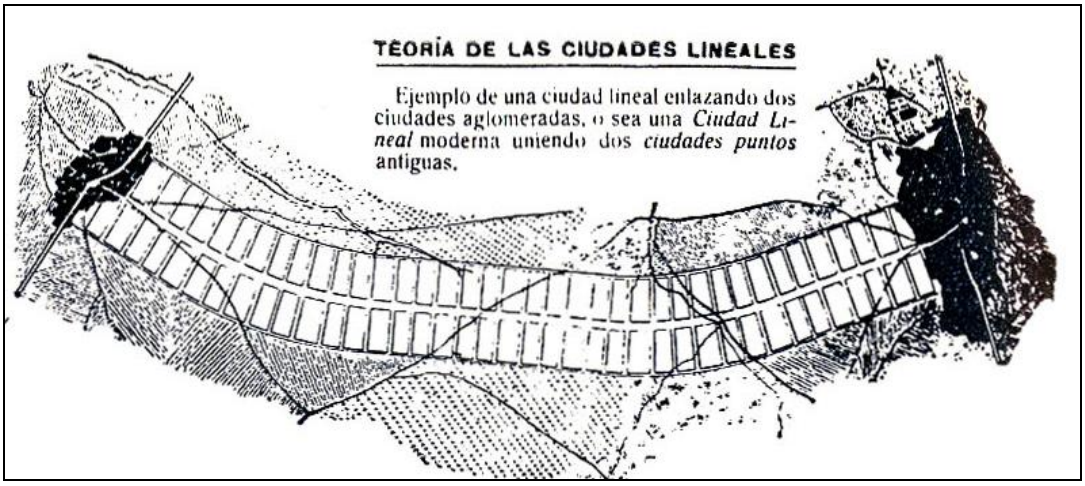


Figure 2: The regional layout of a Ciudad Lineal connection between two old "point-cities" as Soria termed them (Collins, 1965:204)

Houses and buildings could be set alongside linear utility systems supplying water, communications and electricity. Soria y Mata thought that linear cities could criss-cross the entire globe and actually built a linear city on the outskirts of Madrid.

Stalingrad (Saint Petersburg) is the outstanding example of a planned linear city (Spreiregen, 1965:32). Stalingrad (St. Petersburg) is one of the most significant linear plans of all. It was suggested for the industrial towns at the city. N.A. Miliutin, a professor of the Communist Academy approached the problem of the industrial town as if he were designing a well-planned large-scale steam operated power plant. One of his most important contributions to the history of linear planning was his parallel arrangement of elements, buffered by strips of greenery.

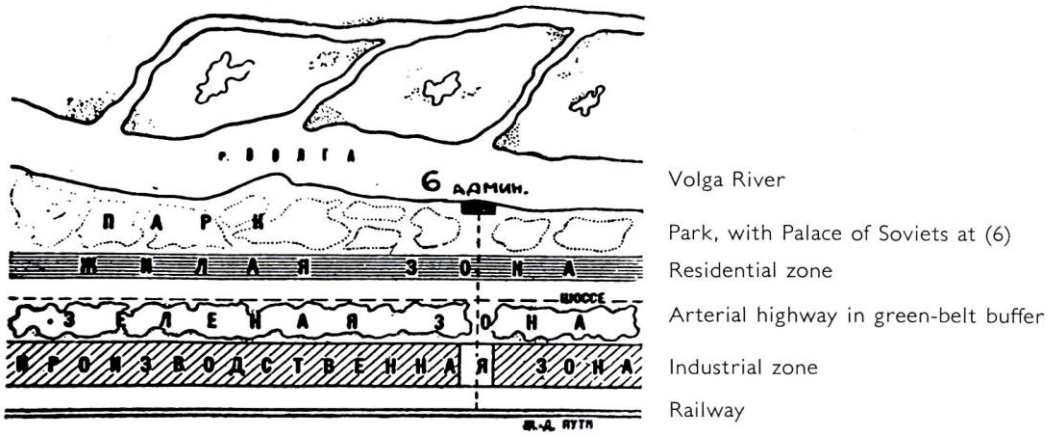


Figure 3: Miliutin's schematic plan for Tractorstoi at Stalingrad (Collins, 1965:210)

For the linear planner, arteries of transportation are like the "spine" or the circulatory system of the body- his desire is to obtain the most efficient, the most organic relationship that can be devised between these arteries and the other functions of our living and working (Collins, 1965:204).

Whether the “spine” is of whole city like in a linear city or it is formed at a particular place of the city like civic center, the function of the element remains the same. This is very important in order to understand the development of a “spine” in different cities in different times.

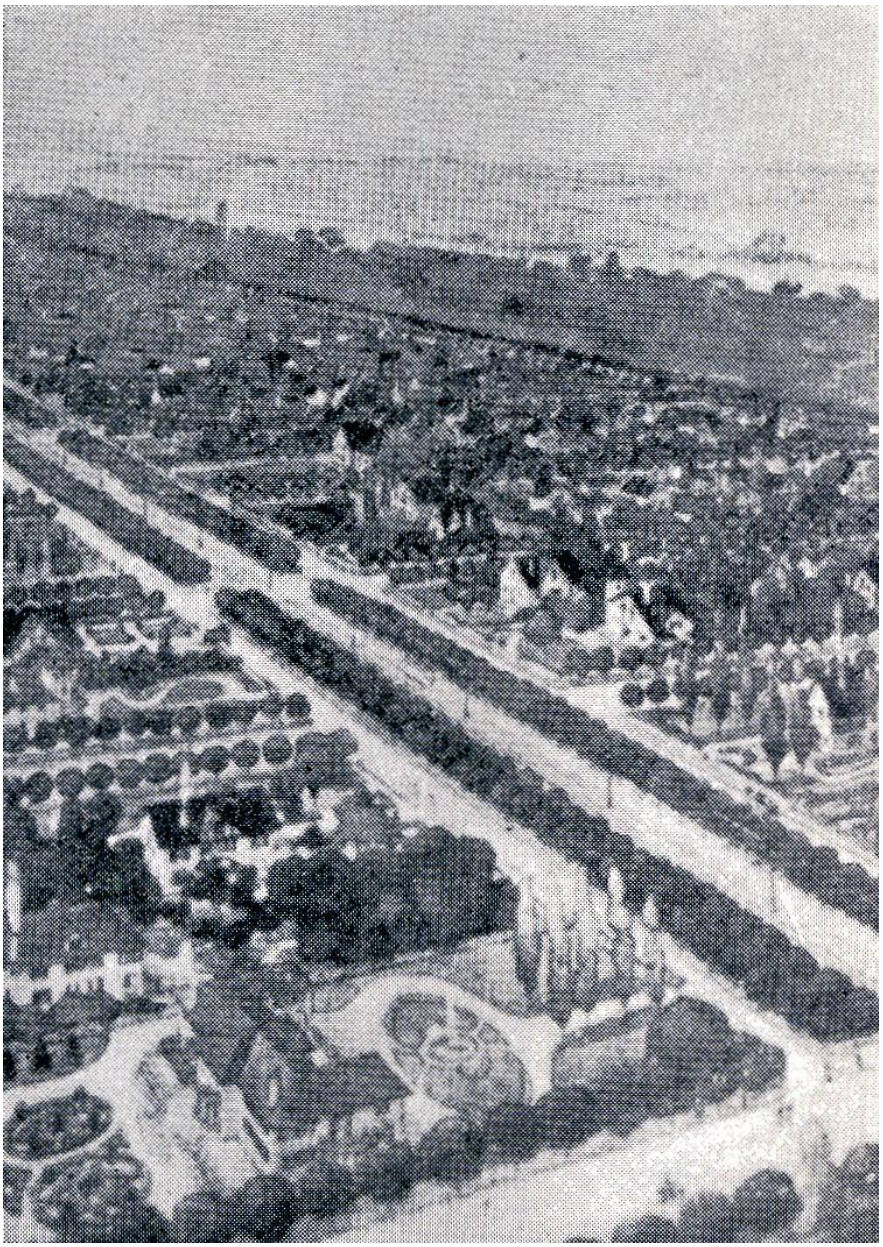


Figure 4: Bird’s eye view of a Ciudad Lineal. A boulevard 40 m wide, tree-lined, and with double car tracks, forms the axis of the community. (Collins, 1965:204)

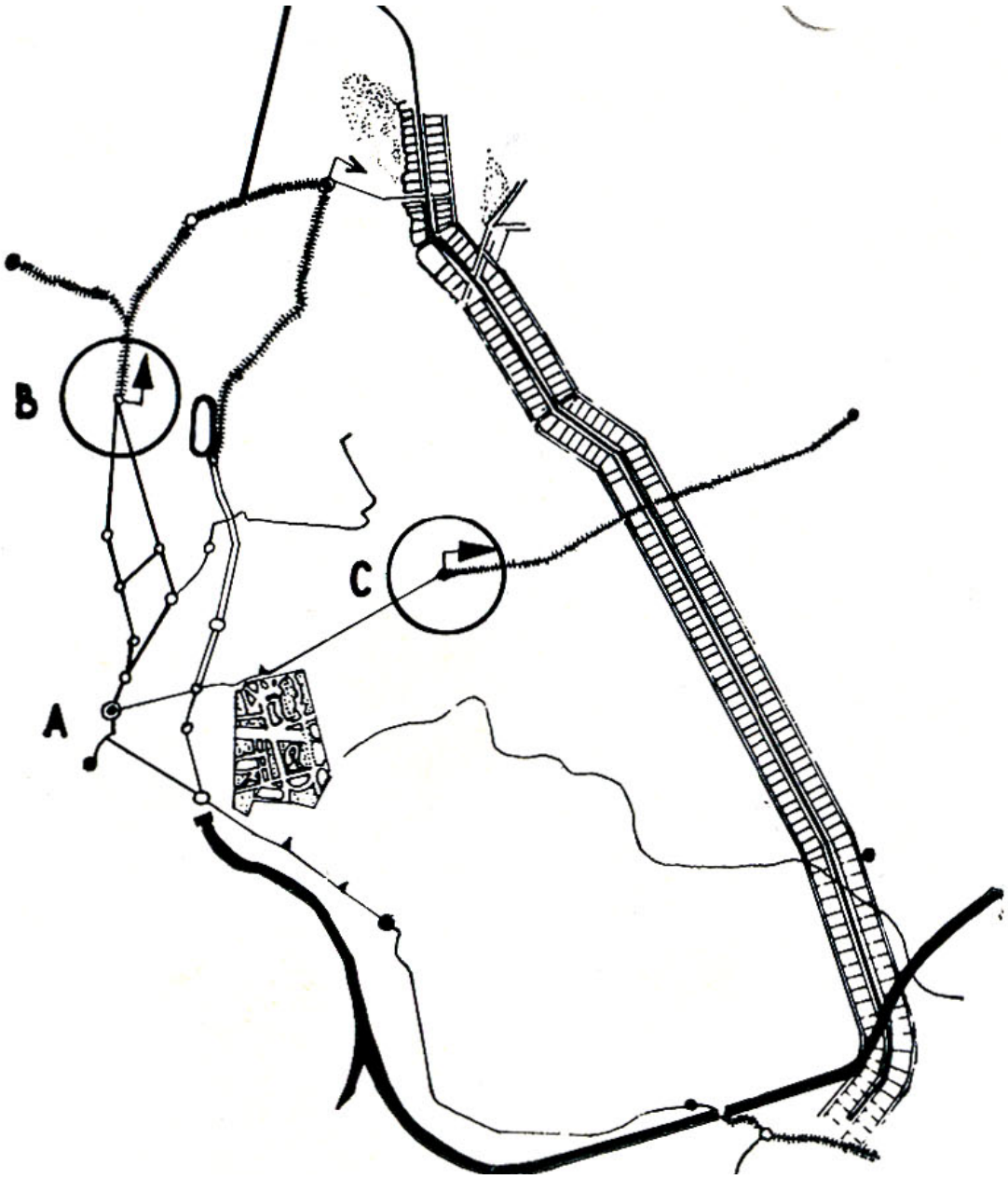


Figure 5: A diagrammatic map of the Ciudad Lineal as finally lay out. This route was completed in 1904, electrified in 1909, and functions in part to this day. A-Puerto Del Sol; B-Cuatro Caminos; C-Ventas (Collins, 1965:205)

In 1919 Gonzalez del Castillo proposed (at the Reconstruction Exposition in Brussels) a regional plan consisting of a series of wider strip cities, each only long enough to accommodate 60,000 residents and zoned for various activities. These would have Imperial Roman type forums at the intersections of their cross-avenues, the main such transverse boulevard connecting up with airport and major railroad lines that were now to run outside the city proper instead of along its central axis (Collins, 1965:205).

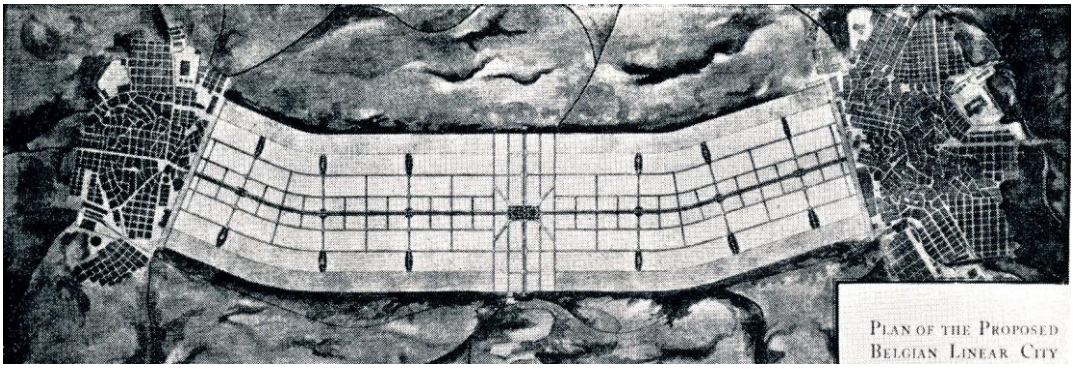


Figure 6: A typical unit of "Belgian Linear City" which Gonzales del Castillo designed in 1919. It is zoned into a central residential and administrative band with boulevard and plazas, two flanking industrial zones, and two other farming belts, all bordered by a continues forest belt. (Collins, 1965:206)

2.2.1.2. City Beautiful Movement

The City Beautiful Movement has its nineteenth-century origins on the boulevards and promenades of the great European capitals: Haussmann's reconstruction of Paris under Napoleon III and the almost simultaneous construction of the Vienna *Ringstrasse* were its classic models. Yet its twentieth-

century manifestations came mainly in other places and cultures: in the great commercial cities of middle and western America, where civic leaders built to overcome collective inferiority complexes and boost business; and in the newly designated capitals of far-flung pieces of Empire, where British civil servants commissioned plans that would express imperial dominance and racial exclusiveness. Then, ironically, the city beautiful came back full circle to its geographical and spiritual point of origin: in Europe, culminating in the 1930s, totalitarian dictators sought to impose megalomaniac visions of glory on their capitals. Despite the superficially very different contexts, there are strange similarities in the outcomes, with implications that perhaps should be disquieting (Hall, 2002:195).

City Beautiful Movement principle, whether used by totalitarian dictators or by the builders of a new city, always contents a wide, monumental “spine” of a movement system. Despite the political side of this “spine”, its functionality and esthetic attracted designers to itself.

In 1901, a national conference was held on city beautification in Washington D.C. The McMillan Commission was then formed to prepare a plan for the improvement of Central Washington. Some of the country’s foremost artists constituted a group, including Daniel Burnham, Augustus St. Gaudens, and Frederick Law Olmsted. They toured Europe for inspiration and returned to propose a grand classical concept of landscape architecture with axes,

mall, focal points, and pools- in effect reviving the original L'Enfant plan for the city. This, together with the example of the world's fairs, initiated a country-wide program of civic improvement efforts: the City Beautiful Era (Spreiregen, 1965:38).

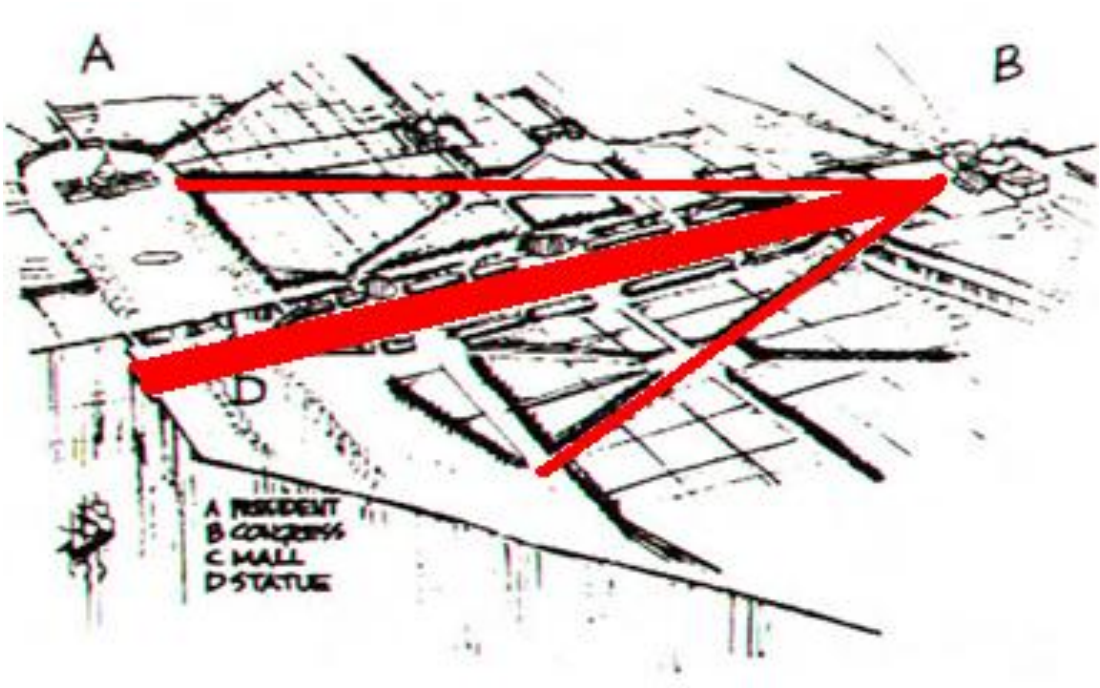


Figure 7: L'enfant's concept for the central Washington, 1791 (Spreiregen, 1965:38)

The McMillan plan recommended the elimination of inappropriate buildings from the mall area to be replaced by Roman Classic structures within a parklike setting. These new buildings were to reflect the grandeur of the U.S. Capitol, the White House, and the Washington Monument. All the new structures were assigned to government functions. Strong axial relation-

ships and broad vistas were created as a way to visually connect the various outlying areas to the central mall. The entire area is now known as the Federal Triangle.

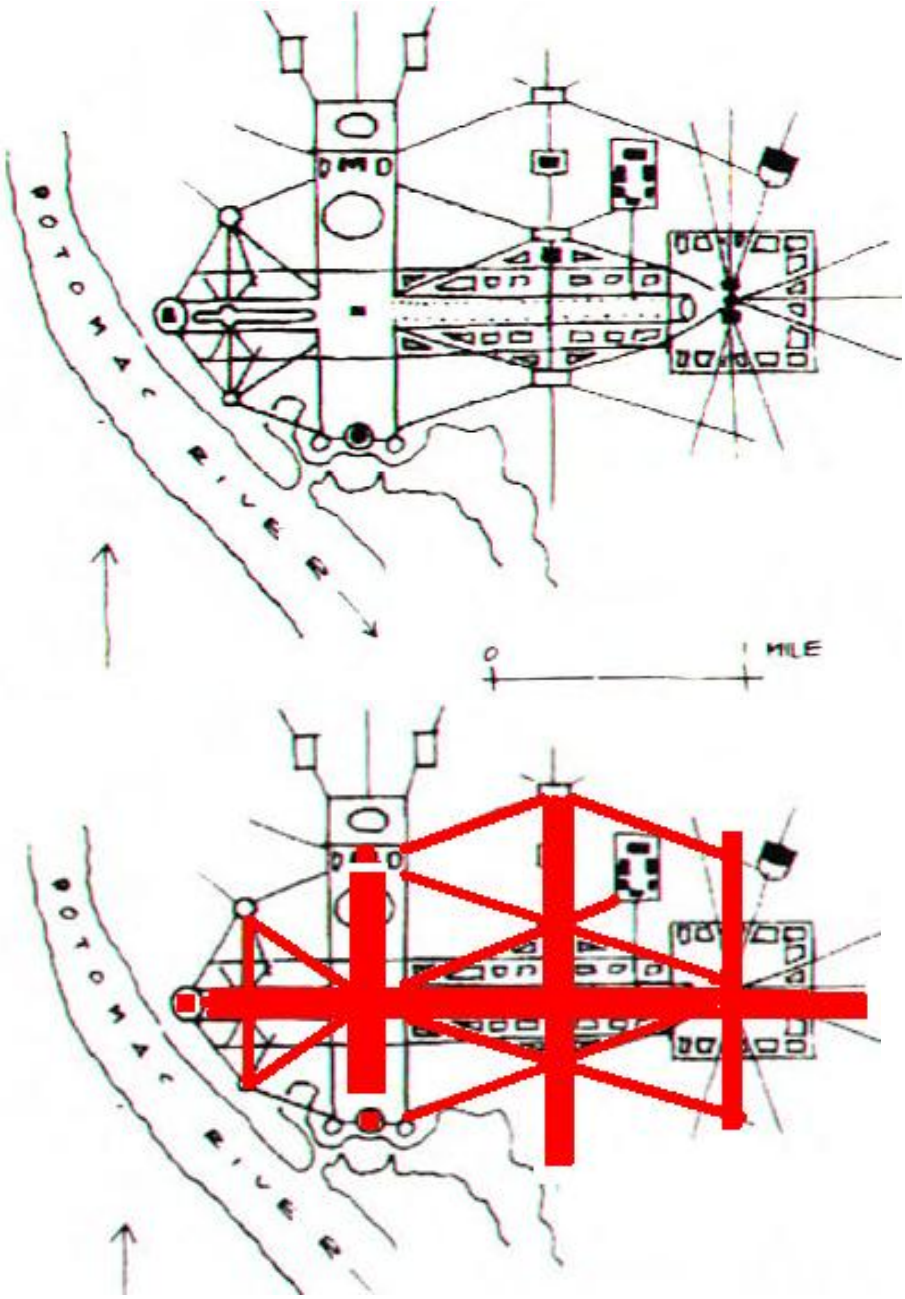


Figure 8: McMillan Commission plan for central Washington (Spreiregen, 1965:38)

Figure 9: Washington Today

In Washington design McMillan Commission used “spines” in two aspects. In one hand, there was a strong design element which shows the aesthetic and the monumental immensity of the new Federal Capital. On the other hand, there was the functionality of using axial movement systems between the governmental buildings. While the main road from the Potamac River to Congress emphasizes the importance of the building of Congress, the wide open space allows the movement of pedestrians easily.

Washington D.C. is one of the great examples of using axial roads as the “spine” of its civic center and was the pioneer of so many cities especially

in the Continent of America. After the success of this movement, many more governments of American cities reshaped their plans according to City Beautiful Movement aspects which include an axial boulevard at the civic center.

The government of Minneapolis was also the proponent of the City Beautiful movement and hired Burnham's firm to create a plan for the city which was released in 1917. Burnham viewed Minneapolis as if it were a great metropolis, although he did not make detailed plans for the entire area until he clearly understand the connections among the various parts. He designed a metropolitan area with Minneapolis as the core.

He believed a city needed a grand entrance. For him that was the railroad depot. Therefore, he proposed that two new depots be built in the gateway district of the city which would provide a grand backdrop to a busy and attractive public space.

He also wished to redesign the north façade of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and Fair Oaks Park. The chief design element is a grand boulevard coming from the center via the Art Institute onto Lake Hamlet's northeast shore.

The grand boulevard was justified as a solution to traffic problems encountered by suburban commuters and a way to provide housing for higher income people in the city. The boulevard would be a way to clear low quality housing in an early "*urban renewal program*". In addition, it would provide a

fire break in the event of a conflagration such as the ones that devastated Chicago and San Francisco.

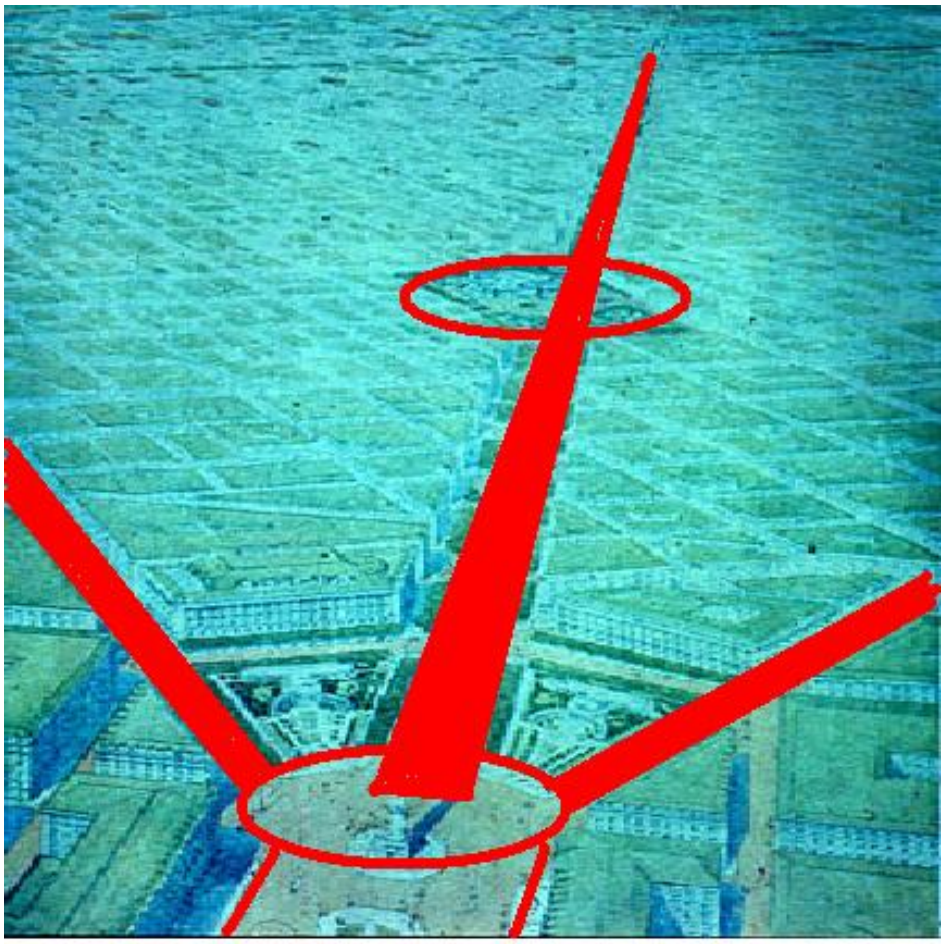


Figure 10: Boulevard of Mineapolis

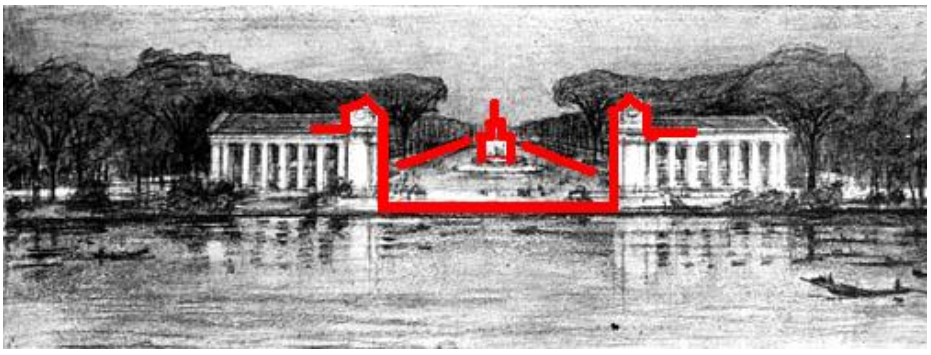


Figure 11: This is the Watergate where the boulevard terminated on the shore of Lake Harriet. It is the approximate location of the Rose Garden.

At his Coronation Durbar in 1911, George V made the momentous announcement that the capital of British India would be transferred from Calcutta to Delhi: a site suitable for its central position, "*easy access*", and "*healthy climate*".

So the new capital would be the concern of a great "*monumental exercise*" by a people lacking the "*taste for monumentality*": "an Anglo-Indian Rome … one size larger than life". Ironically, taking 20 years to finish, it was then to fill that role for a mere 16 years.

It is really a great event in the history of the world and of architecture – that rulers should have the strength and the sense to do the right thing. It would only be possible now under despotism – someday perhaps democracies will follow … It must not be Indian, nor English, nor Roman, but it must be imperial. In two thousand years there must be an Imperial Lutyens tradition in Indian architecture … Hurrah for despotism! (Hall, 2002:198-199).

The critical decisions on the plan of the new city came very quickly in February-March 1913; the choice of the southern site was ratified on March 7, the plan outlines were confirmed on March 20. from the acropolis on the heights of Raisina, the main axis would run east to the ancient capital of Indrapat, symbolizing "the keystone of the rule over the Empire of India," as the committee's report had it; two other major radials would also fan out from it, in classic City Beautiful fashion; a cross-radial, joining the new Anglican cathedral on the south and the railway station on the north, would intersect

them. The resulting final plan reflects Lutyens's passion for formal geometry: the Secretariat and the War Memorial Arch both have seven radiating routes, the great railway station circle no less than ten; virtually all main roads make 30° or 60° angles with the routes connecting these three foci, and all major buildings are at centers or angles or mid-sides of hexagons. As Baker came to realize years after, there are uncanny similarities with L'Enfant's plan for Washington (Hall, 2002:201).

Different from the two examples of "City Beautiful Movement" of America, New Delhi has great influence of colonist despotism. The axial road system of New Delhi binds the ancient capital with new capital of British India.

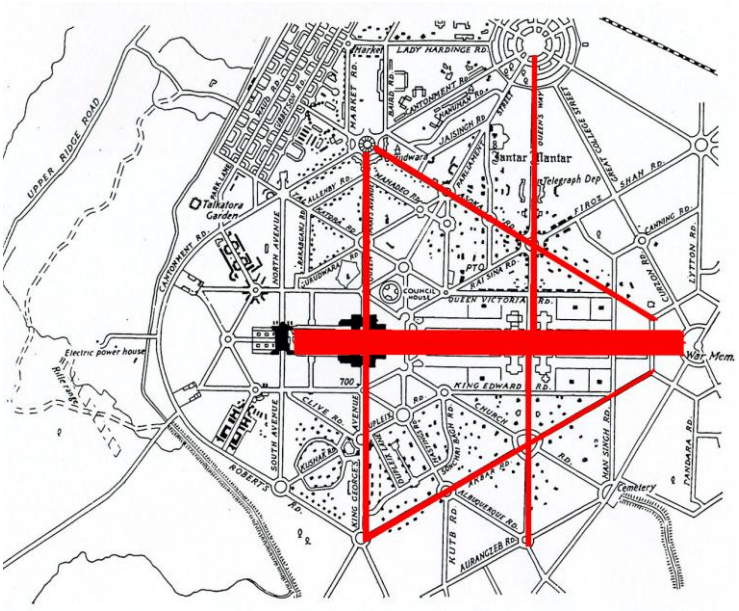


Figure 12: New Delhi The Lutyens-Baker plan: symbolic of the awesome power of the Raj.(Hall, Peter; Cities of Tomorrow (An intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century, 2002:199)

2.2.1.3. Circulation as a Problem

The *Congres International d'Architecture Moderne* (CIAM), an international group of architects and planners who discussed the urbanization problems that were appearing in all the world cities, in 1931 proclaimed their dedication to the service of urban planning. The English CIAM organization, the Mars group, proposed a plan for rebuilding London. The whole population would be redistributed in sixteen finger corridors all connected by a major circulation spine and encircling circulation loop (Spreiregen, 1965:46).

The proposal of Mars group for London concentrated on circulation in order to solve the traffic congestion problem of a city which has a rapid growth. A major spine and an encircling loop also connect the city to the hinterland of it.

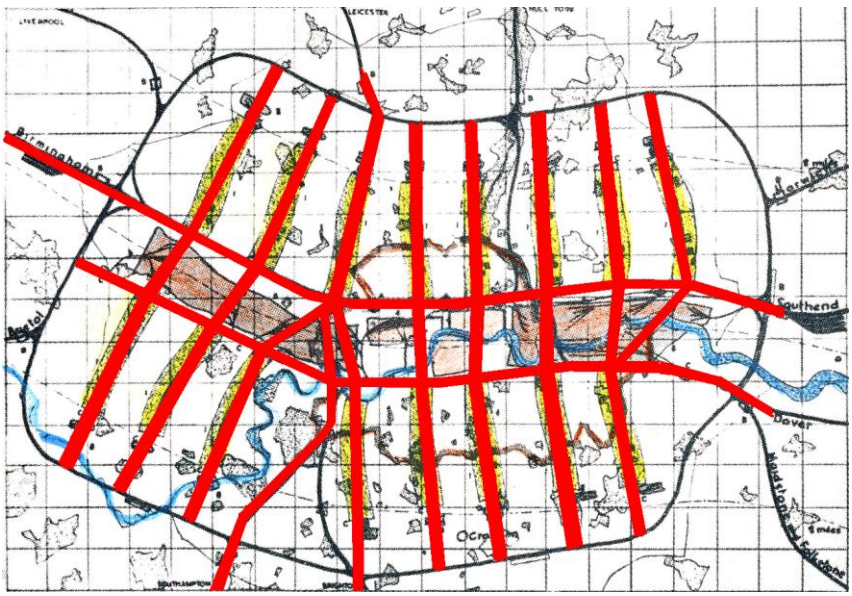


Figure 13: Plan for London by the Mars Group, 1939 (Collins, 1965:215)

Great study has been concentrated on the problems of circulation and urban design. For example, Louis Kahn has made important designs for Central Philadelphia showing circulation- main arteries, stop-and-go streets, and parking towers- as key determinants of urban form, all organized into a symphony of circulation (Spreiregen, 1965:46).

Philadelphia had another example of spinal movement system for civic center in order to solve the problem of circulation. “Spine” is the urban form that is used by the designers. This form also gives possibility to reorganize center more monumental and aesthetically beautiful.

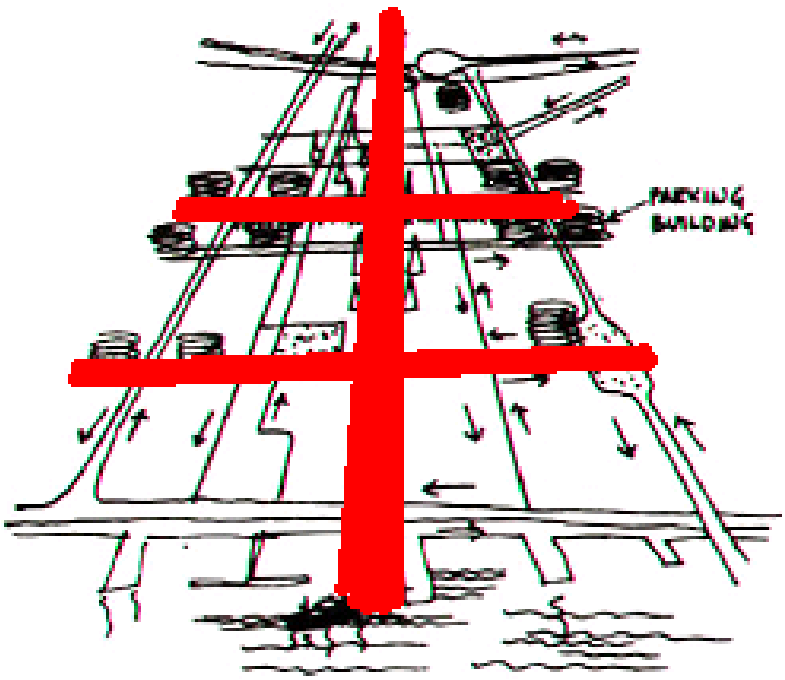


Figure 14: Louis Kahn’s movement pattern for Philadelphia (Spreiregen, 1965:46)

2.2.2. Spinal Movement Systems in History of City Development

Spinal Movement Systems were used by the designers while searching for the “ideal city” especially in the first half of nineteen nineties. The “Linear City” and “City Beautiful” are two of the urban design movements that propose “spine” as the part of the solution in macro form and in the center of the city.

However the axial movement systems not only used by these periods of history but also the city builders and designers used this construction form for political and functional reasons and in order to fulfill design aspects. In the history of Cities from Ancient times to present day, city builders used often the spinal movement systems as the constructive element of the whole city structure or a part of it. Whether it was an ancient city of trade, or an outcome of a “City Beautiful Movement”, the power of this handsome element seemed to have attractiveness for the decision makers of the towns. Not only designers but also rulers, governors, and even the dictators have preferred it for different reasons.

2.2.2.1. Ancient Greece

One of the most brilliant historic examples of a human channel of movement is the Panathenaic procession in Ancient Greece. With the basic points once established- the simplicity of the single *central movement system* through the city, the understanding of the value of memory and of response

to forms, - we can now view the Panathenaic procession not merely as a spectacle of humans and animals in harmonic movement, but as the *central organizing force* in the architectural and planning development of Athens (Bacon, 1967:50).

The Panathenaic Way was for more than a city street; it was part of a system of regional movement which linked some of the most sacred places in Greece. It was the central “spine” along which occurred the principal mercantile, industrial, and political activities which made up the life of the city (Bacon, 1967:51-53).

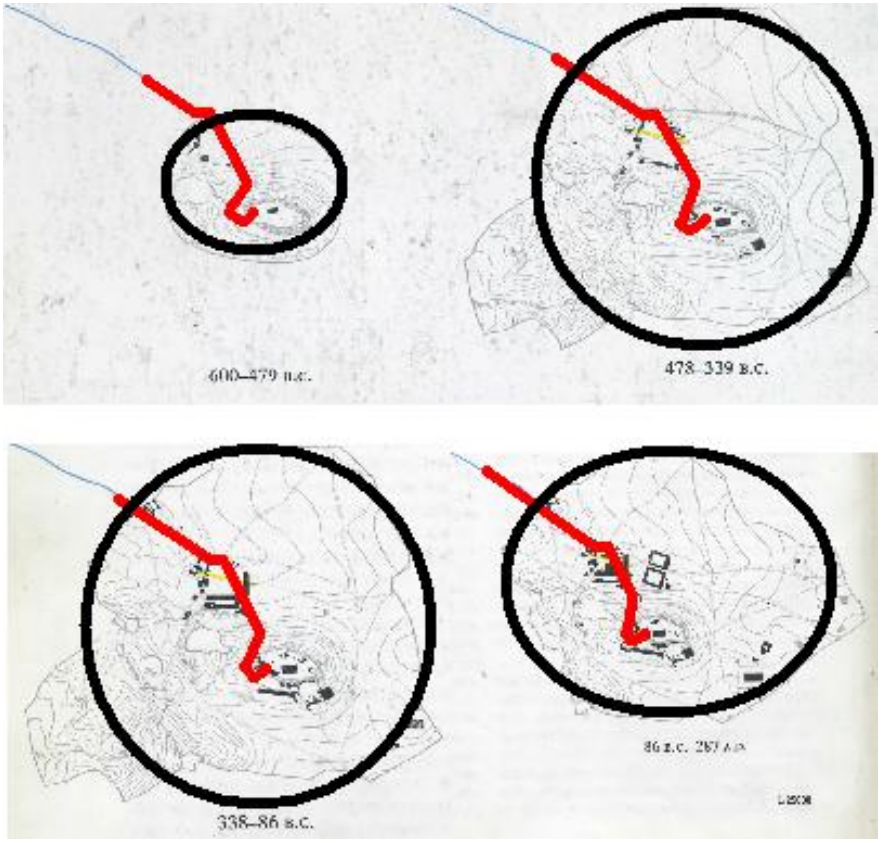


Figure 15: Development of Athens and Panathenaic Way (Bacon 1967:52)

Miletus, influenced by the great Greek city planner Hippodamus, is one of the most splendid city plans. It shows how it is possible to develop forms of tremendously dynamic quality as counterpoint to the rigid discipline of the grid-iron plan. The repetitive module of the regular rectangular blocks which constitute the residential part of the city, the temples, the gymnasia, and the stoas facing inward onto the agoras and out toward the harbors (Bacon, 1967:75).

In fact in Miletus, there were no distinctive spine forms because all the streets had the same scale on the grid iron system. The movement axes were determined according to the social status of the districts. The spines were; the road which connected the two shores of the peninsula and another one which began from the gate of the city.

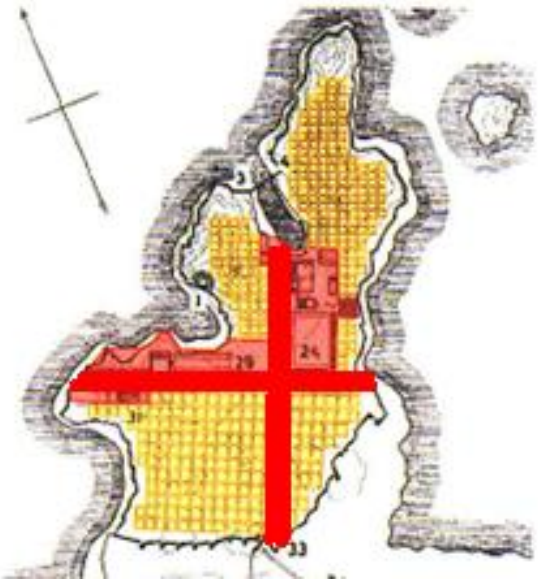


Figure 16: Miletus (7th century B.C. 2nd century A.D.) (Gunay, 2007:103)

The cities Side and Perge in Pamphylia are the most significant examples of the city structures formed on spines, which meant the existence of more powerful political systems within themselves. Side, Pamphylia's largest port, stands on a small peninsula extending north south into the sea where the main road from the gate found the theatre and the agora at the entrance to the peninsula, and then traversed it diagonally ending at the temples of Athena and Apollo. A continuous system of columns shaded the main shopping streets. Spine dominated the city, and whenever its direction changed, the direction of grid patterns also changed. In every turn of the spine, public structures and spaces located enhancing those places (Günay, 2007:105).

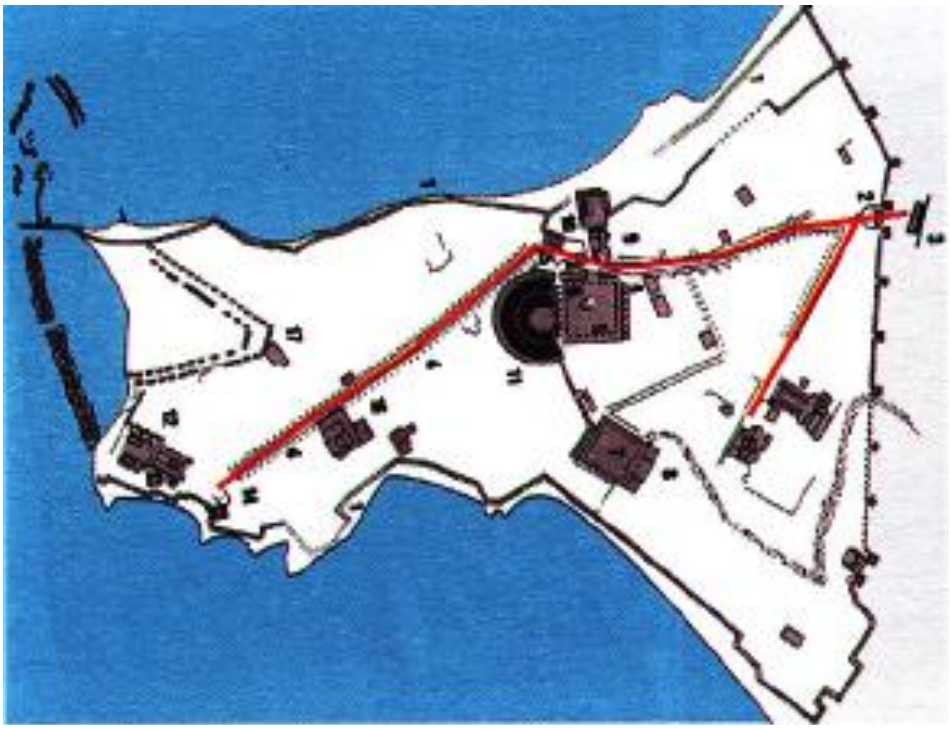


Figure 17: Side (7th century B.C.) plan; clear spine and the heart of the city (Gunay, 2007:105)

In Perge, the “winding spine” formed the whole structure of the city. It started with the city gate accompanied by Agora and the Bath, at end on the north with the Nymphaeum that stood at the foot of the Acropolis, and at the centre of the road, there was a water channel dividing the road into two lanes. The main spine was rich in shops, supported by colonnaded portico resembling the streets of Side, which provided shelter against rains in winter, and protection against hot summer sun (Günay, 2007:105-106).

Figure 18: Perge (4th century B.C.). The winding spine supported by clusters (Gunay, 2007:106)

The city of Phaselis placed in the southwestern coast of Turkey with three harbors. The city lies on an isthmus between two main harbors and one secondary harbor. Along the isthmus, the main avenue of Phaselis connects the two harbors. On either side of the avenue are sidewalks and shops.

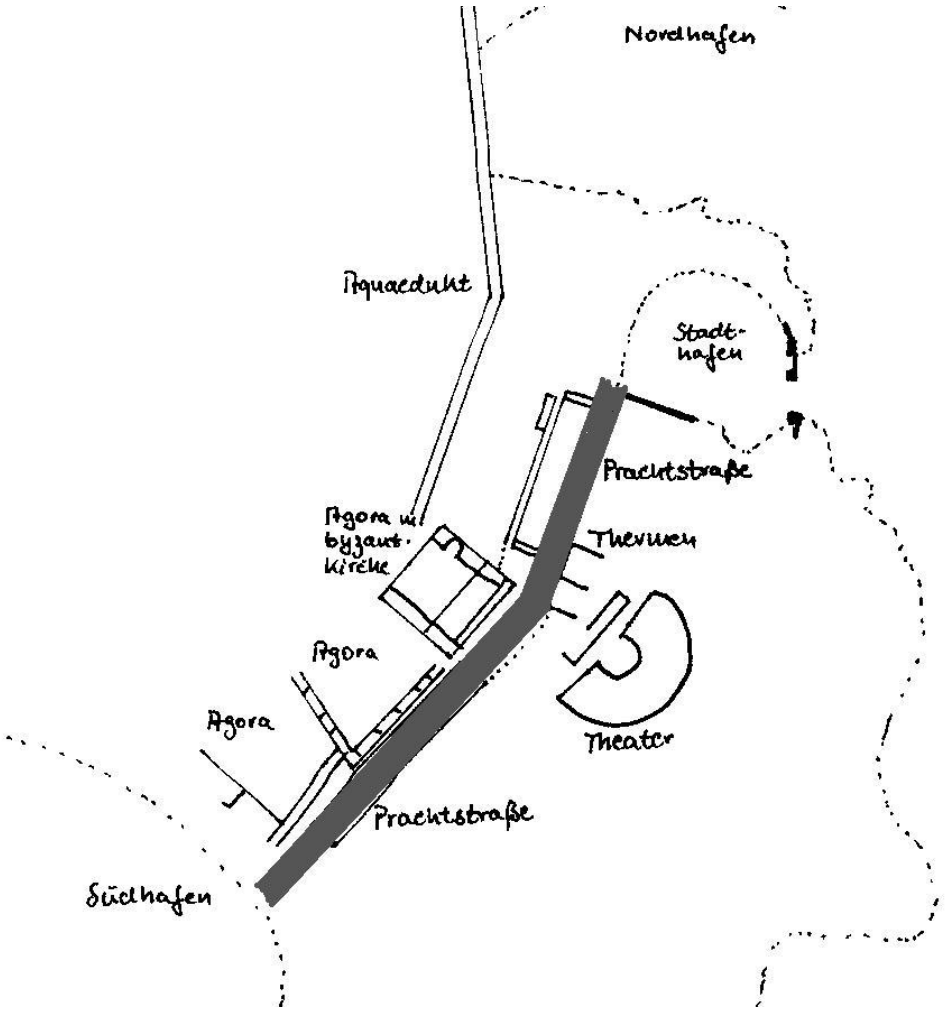


Figure 19: Phaselis (7thh century B.C.)

2.2.2.2. Ancient Rome

In their towns, Romans chose another kind of module, one for relating all the parts of the town. The Greeks had done this, too, in a sense. Their urban module was based on a house but the Roman urban module was more abstract. Their basic urban pattern based on rather than the human scale, but on street patterns for military purposes (Spreiregen, 1965:6).

The Romans, with their emphasis on street layout, introduced the idea of major and minor streets that are two main streets at right angles. They were called a “Cardo” and a “Decumanus” and divided the town into four quarters. This system of town design was a simple but well-organized framework. The places of public assembly were the Theater, the Arena, and the Market. However, they were not placed axially on the streets, as one might expect from such a highly organized society. The public buildings, too, were treated as elements subordinate to the street layout rather than as monumental features. The development of fully monumental design concepts came in ancient Rome in its cluttered central area (Spreiregen, 1965:6).

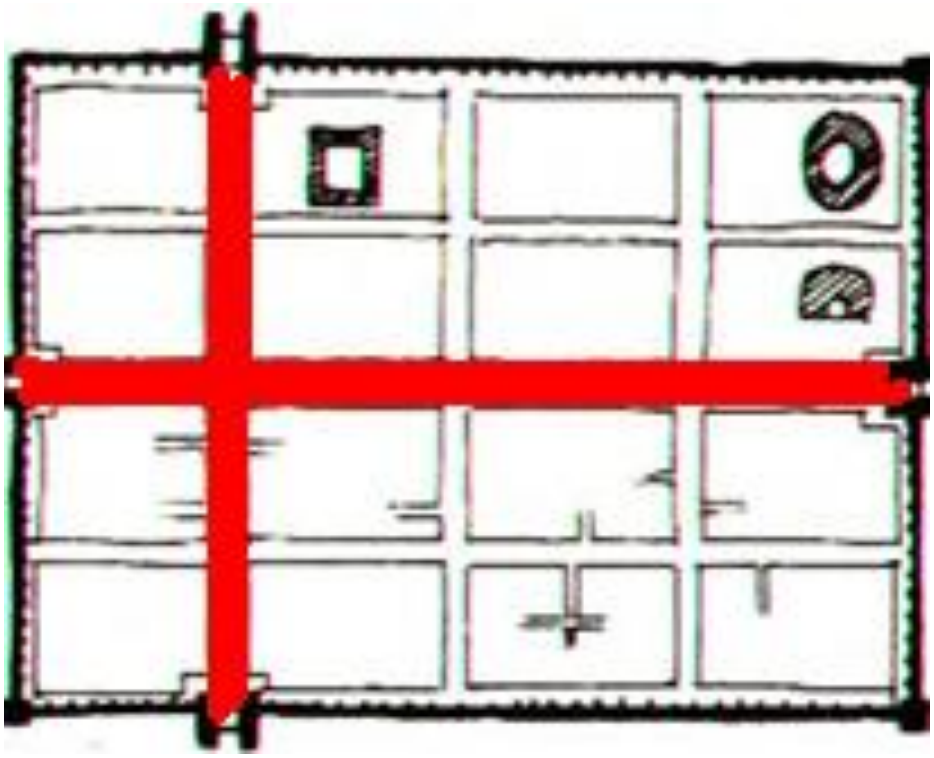


Figure 20: Aosta, a typical Roman military town (Spreiregen 1965:6)

2.2.2.3. Classical Rome-Compression

The design structure of classical Rome was built up of massive monumental buildings of formal geometrical design, laid against one another by sheer inertia of their mass. The forms grew in vastness and achieved sufficient size to give texture and richness to the total extent of the topography. But no underlying design element in scale with the total space existed. The early city is an example of the accumulation of harmonious elements which produced an effect of unity because of their similar theme.

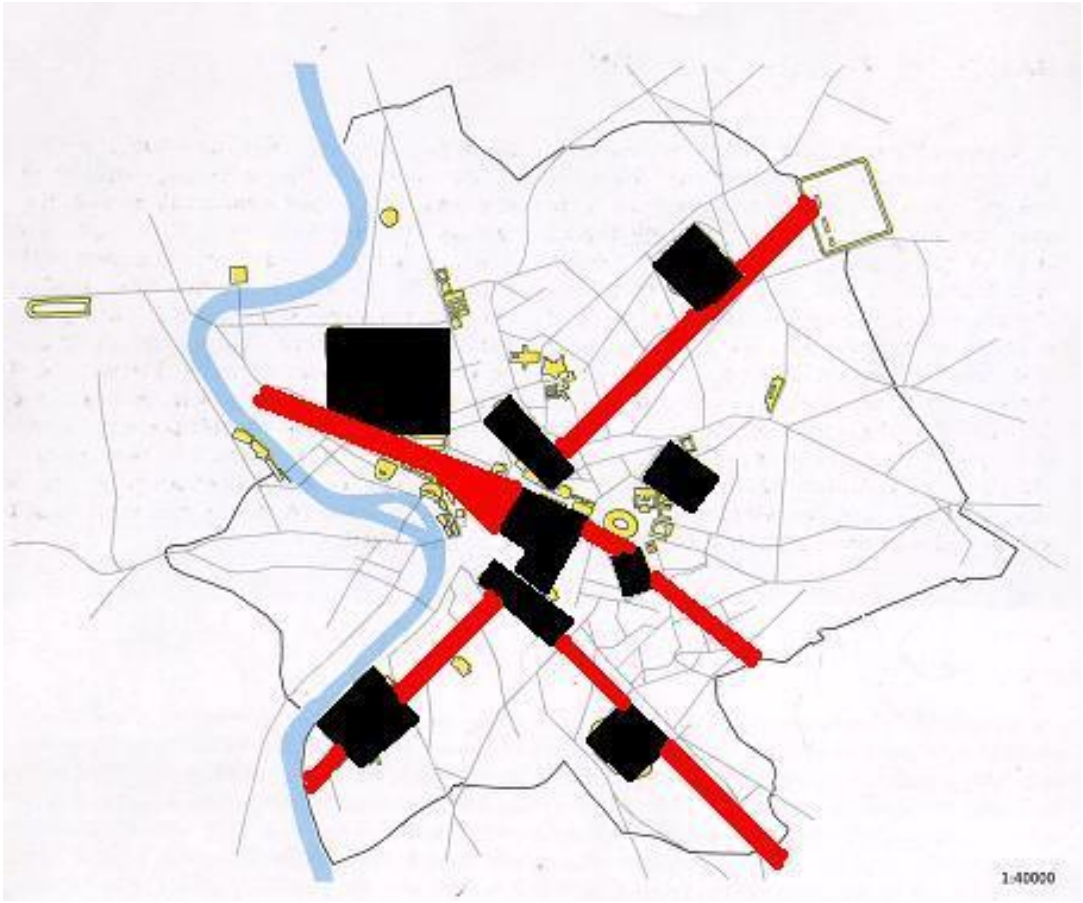


Figure 21: Classical Rome 3rd century A.D. (Bacon 1967:72)

The Via Sacra constituted a movement system punctuated by triumphal arches and characterized by a series of elegant views, but of itself this did not impose the basic form of the design pattern. The section of the ancient Via Flaminia (now the Via del Corso) leading from the Flaminian Gate was also a central and important way of movement in Rome, with a series of arches erected in different periods, but this could not be counted as a major influence in the development of the over-all design (Bacon, 1967:72).

2.2.2.4. Baroque Rome – Tension

Baroque Rome of some thirteen hundred years later represents the opposite extreme. Here the buildings themselves are generally much smaller in scale than the great baths, stadia, amphitheaters and fora of classical Rome, yet the total design impact is great indeed. We can see an entirely different concept at work: the establishment of points in space pinned down by the vertical mass of the obelisks, and the definition of lines of tension between these points. The articulation along the lines of movement is not arbitrary, as it was in the placing of arches in the Via Sacra and the Via Flaminia in classical Rome; instead it is determined by the crossing points of the forces of tension derived from the location of the ancient buildings, churches, gates, and public squares.

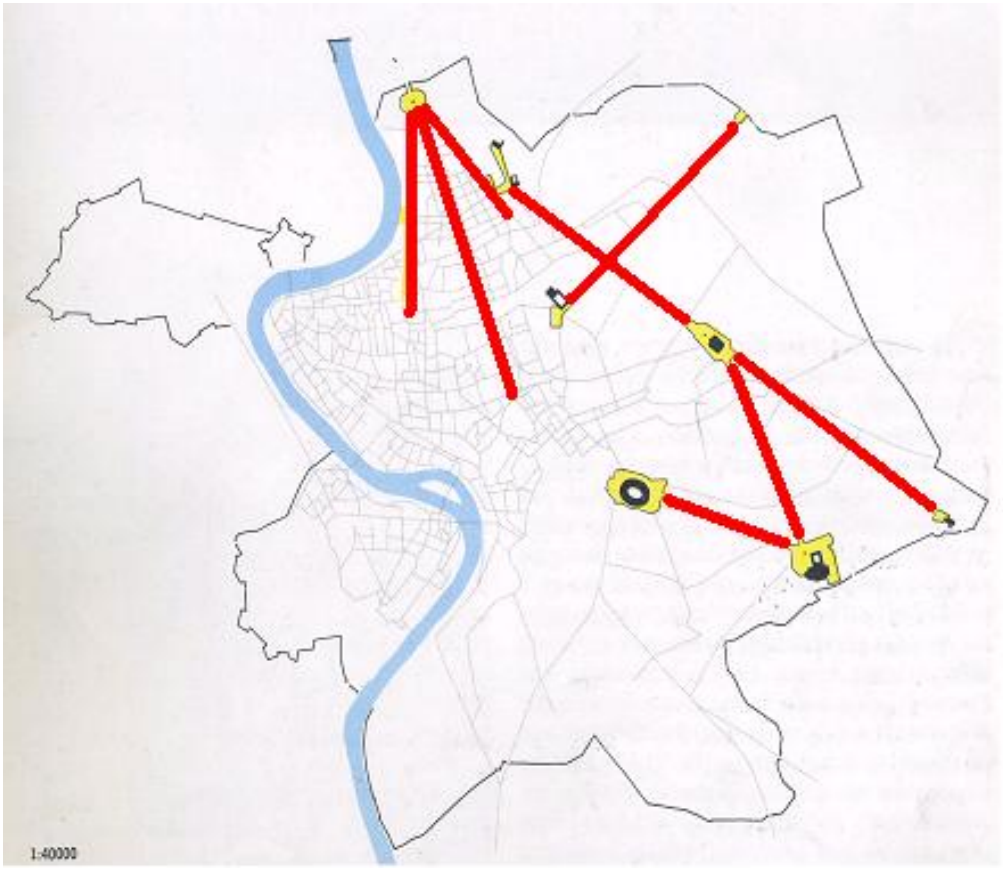


Figure 22: Baroque Rome (Bacon, 1967:73)

As we look at the basic design ideas of the third century A.D. and compare them with those expressed in the plan of Sixtus V for Rome thirteen hundred years later, we are challenged to consider exactly what is the under-lying idea for design at a city-wide scale today. The nearly four hundred years that have elapsed since the time of Sixtus V have seen a completely different scale of metropolitan growth, with greater complexity and speed of movement. While this twentieth-century idea will include some elements of both the classical and Baroque methods of design growth, it must contain some completely new ingredients if it is to be effective (Bacon, 1967:73).

2.2.2.5. Ancient America

On the other hand, in a very different place of the ancient world, in South America the same feature of the design had been used by the first urban designers of the time. The plan of the central portion of Teotihuacan, is showing us the great ceremonial way, which terminated at the Pyramid of the Moon on the north but ran southward across the valley for over five kilometers. The Citadel and the Great Compound were the administrative and commercial centers of the city, located at the major cross street (East Avenue-West Avenue).

Temples and houses of the nobility lined the great way, which ascends by intermittent steps toward the monumental pyramids. Walled residential and industrial compounds make up the basic texture of the city. The plan shows the city at the height of its power in 450 A.D., when it covered eight square miles, and may have held up to 200,000 people (Lynch, 1981:11).

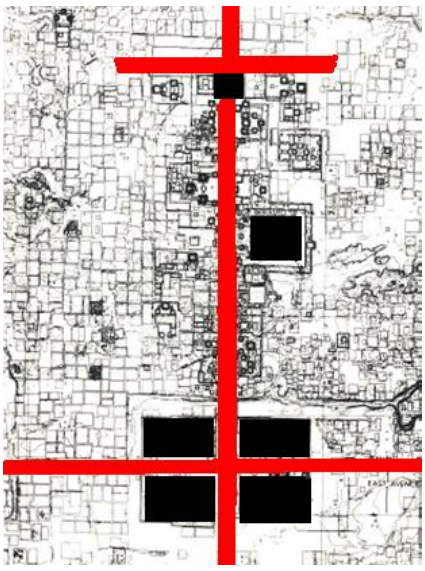


Figure 23: Teotihuacan 450 A.D. (Lynch, 1981:11)

2.2.2.6. Medieval Design

With the fall of Roman Empire, building on the scale used in classical Rome disappeared from the Western European scene. Gradually a new integration of design took place which produced city design based on rational principles (Bacon, 1967:79).

The early medieval towns had no differentiation of street types because they need none. However, as the towns grew and as traffic increased, the different types of traffic found their logical way along different types of streets. Traffic from town gate to central plaza sought a direct and convenient course (Spreiregen, 1965:11).

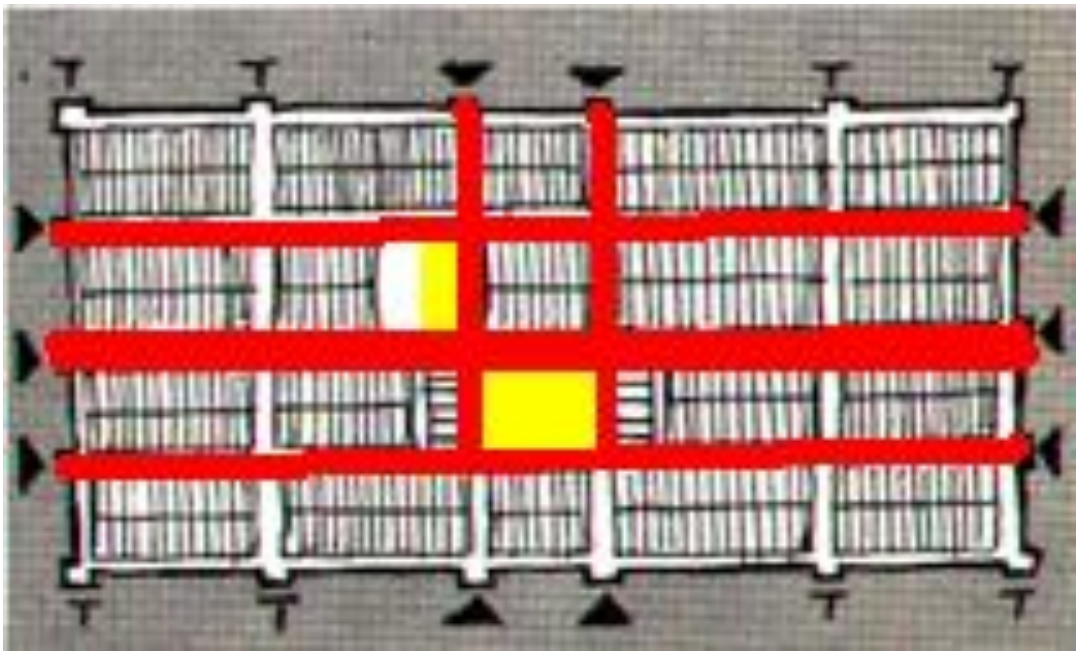


Figure 24: Monpazier, a Fortified Town built by the English in Southern France in 1284 (Spreiregen 1965:11)

The familiar geometry of the grid layout is sometimes found in medieval towns, usually in those built as colonial outposts. Aigues Mortes, in Southern France, was built either by an English king to establish his power there or by crusaders as a stop on the trip eastward. It is a simple rectangle with defensive wall, moat, and circular stronghold tower at one corner. The streets are a grid and there is a plaza at the center, but the streets do not lead directly from the gates to the plaza, probably to confuse an enemy who might break in (Spreiregen, 1965:11).

2.2.2.7. Urban Design in the Renaissance and Baroque

The coming of the Renaissance (1440) brought new energy, new ideas, and a new rational basis for city extension in accord with the new scale of city growth. It was in Florence that the Renaissance first found full expression (Bacon, 1967:93).

The science of perspective was first used in Renaissance to outline mass. This was the beginning of a new idea of design. The space between the object and the vanishing point was merely a convenience for determining how the angles of the mass should be directed. This sets into motion the idea of architectural design, not as the manipulation of experience along an axis of movement through space. Many designers tried to design the ideal cities with various shapes- star shaped, polygon, grid-iron, or rectangular. The surviving

fortification walls of these cities are the remnants of these ideal designs (Bacon, 1967:123).

As interesting as these ideal cities are in the history of urban design, their very attractions have obscured a far more important accomplishment of the early Renaissance: public works and civic improvement projects. Of these programs Ferrara's is the most interesting to improve circulation, sanitation, and defense.

2.2.2.7.1. Rebuilding Ferrara

When Hercules I inherited the throne of city-state Ferrara, the city which was positioned between two rivers, had a scramble of narrow streets surrounded by an obsolete wall. Hercules ordered rebuilding of his city to a very able architect and city planner, Biaggio Rossetti.

Rossetti first prepared a plan for rebuilding old Ferrara, providing for street widening, the erection of new buildings in the old town, and the improvement of the encircling wall. Second, he made a plan for enlarging Ferrara, more than doubling its size, specifying new walls, gates, main roads, plazas, and key buildings. Third, he spent the remainder of his career carrying forward the major elements of his plan. The importance of Rossetti's three-pronged approach lies in the logic of his original plan, for it suited perfectly the realities of town building in his day.

Rossetti planned three new broad streets for the extension of Ferrara. One of these ran east-west and would connect the new city with the old. The other two were at right angles and divided the city into four quadrants. At their intersection he designed a new palace for Hercules, the Palazzo Diamanti. In Rossetti's day there was no assurance that a proposed street would come into being just because it was designated on a plan. A more compelling by the force was required - which Rossetti provided by the sheer logic of his plan. All main streets connected vital points of the town to each other: gates to palace; gates to old fortress; plazas to plazas; and the important buildings to each other (Spreiregen, 1965:13-14).

Figure 25: Ferrara. The original town lies below the street marked a-a. b-b and c-c are the two main crossing streets of Rosetti's plan. The Palazzo Diamenti is marked p (Spreiregen, 1965:13)

2.2.2.7.2. Rebuilding Rome

Like the cities of Northern Italy, Rome was confronted with problems of growth, but in a city of old ruins. Problems of circulation, defense, water supply, and sanitation prompted the Popes to undertake civic improvement projects. Rome was a place of pilgrimage and its important centers were the shrines of Christianity. To connect these special sites and shrines, Pope Sixtus V commissioned architect Domenico Fontana to prepare a street plan. He marked out the key points in the city with tall obelisks left over from the days of the Roman Empire. Fontana realized that the jumble of Rome's hills and stone ruins needed a system of strong visual accents to mark out the overall street design concept (Spreiregen, 1965:15).

This was a new concept of urban design. Spines were used for the first time in urban planning to combine politics, functions and design. The straight, huge roads connected the shrines of Christianity for pilgrim. Furthermore, some roads were so long that new churches were constructed along these roads.

The plan of Fontana neglected the topography of the city. Rome was situated on seven hills. Because of this rough terrain, he could not realize some of these spines. Nevertheless, these roads established a framework for the city's growth.

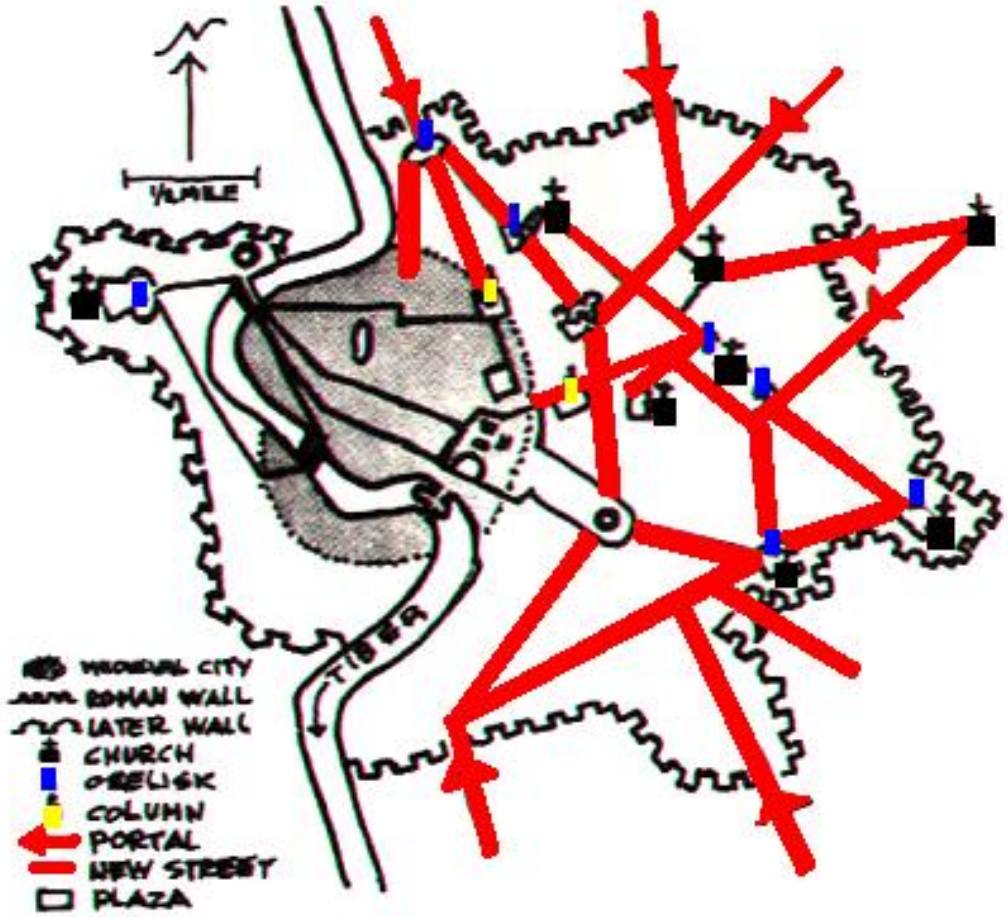


Figure 26: Fontana's Plan for, Rome. His intent was to connect the shrines of Christianity and other monuments by a network of streets. In so doing he established a framework for the city's growth. (Spreiregen 1965:15)

Extending from the Porta del Popolo in the northern wall of the city (circled in red and marked "A" in the figure 27) in the foreground are three converging streets, the right –hand one leading to Porto di Ripetta at the Tiber River (circled in green). To these streets Sixtus added a fourth one extending directly to Santa Maria Maggiore (also circled in red and marked 28 on this plan). Only the portion from San Trinita dei Monti (circled in blue) was built and is in figure 27 shown as a red line intersected by the old Strada Pia.

This connects with the Dioscuri (circled in green), clearly visible on the Quirinal Hill, and with Michelangelo's Porta Pia (circled in blue and marked "D").

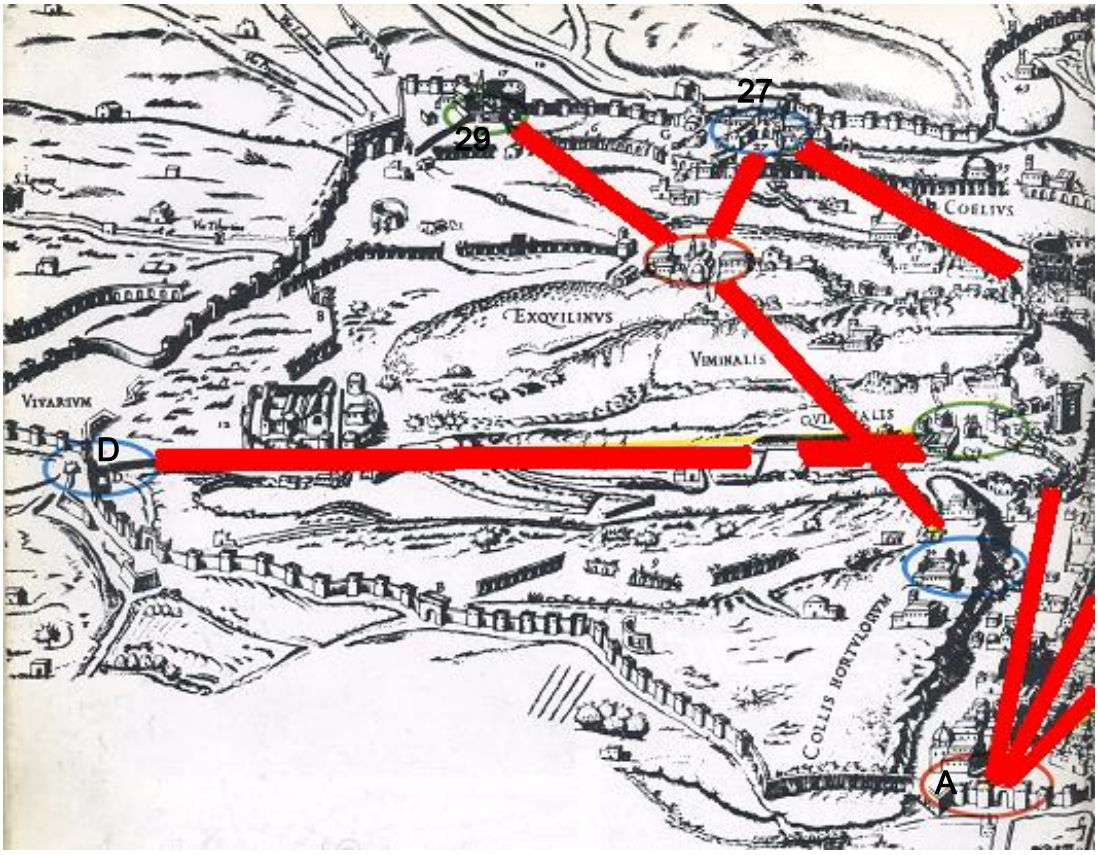


Figure 27: Baroque Rome and Sixtus V (Bacon, 1967:126)

From Santa Maria Maggiore one new road branched off to Santa Croce (circled in green and marked 29) and another one reached to San Giovanni in Laterano (circled in blue and marked 27) by a route indicated in red in this illustration. From here another route led to Colosseum (Bacon, 1967:126-127).

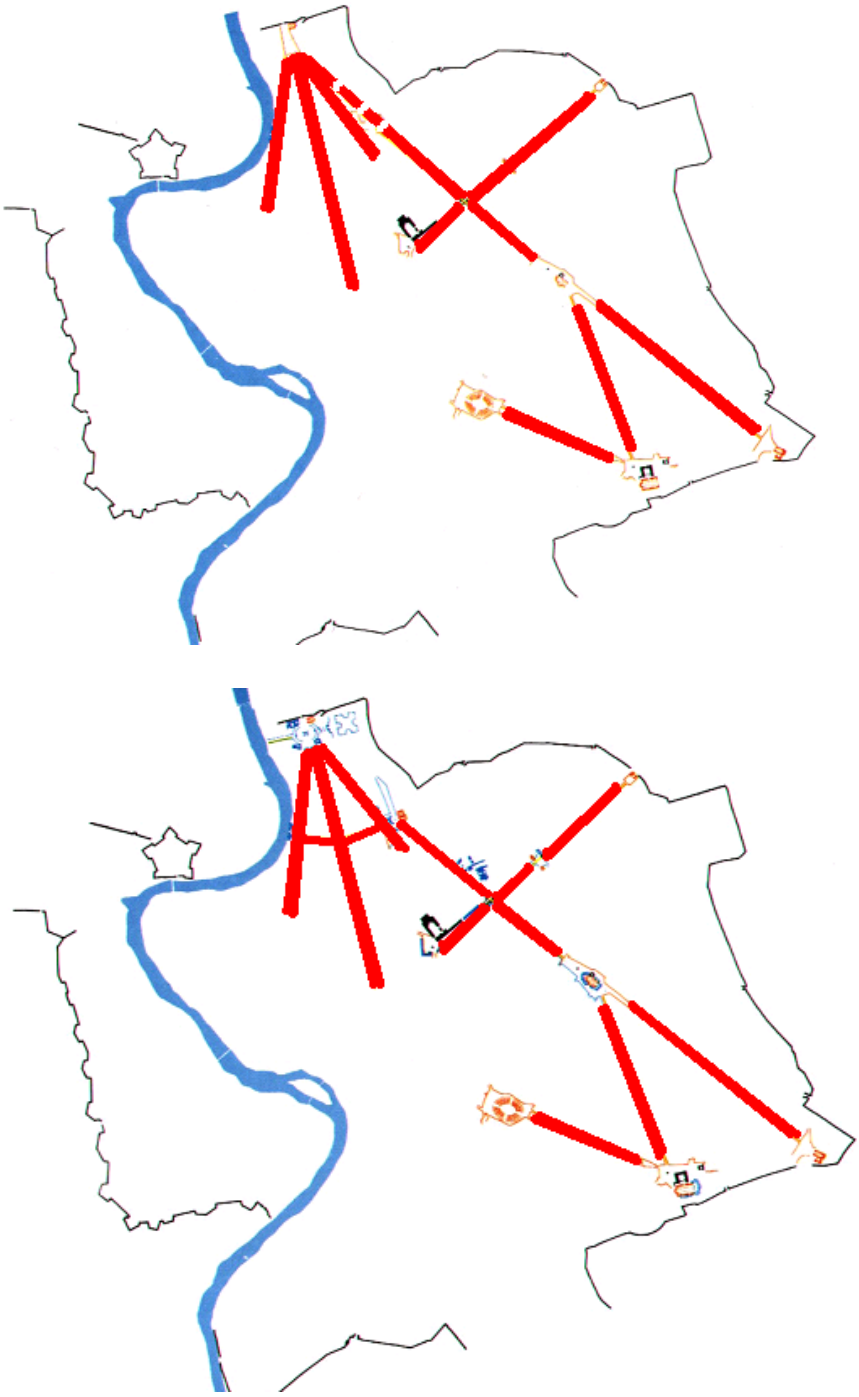


Figure 28: Above: The design process of Sixtus V Below: Contemporary Rome (Bacon, 1967:128-129)

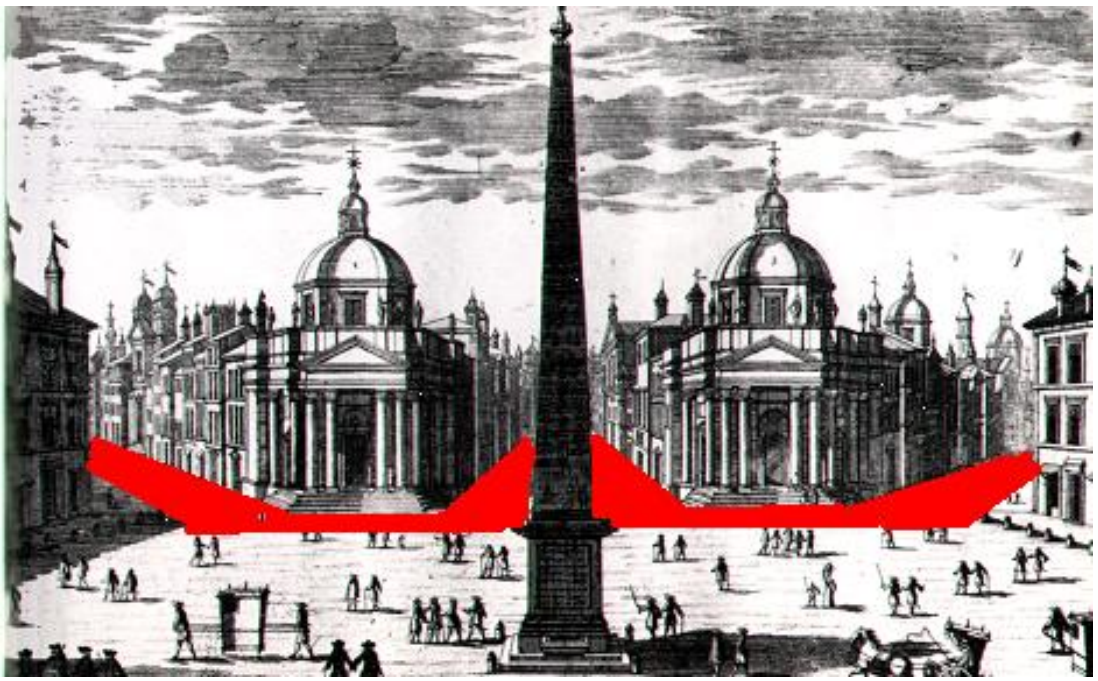


Figure 29: Piazza del Popolo Rome. (Bacon, 1967:155)

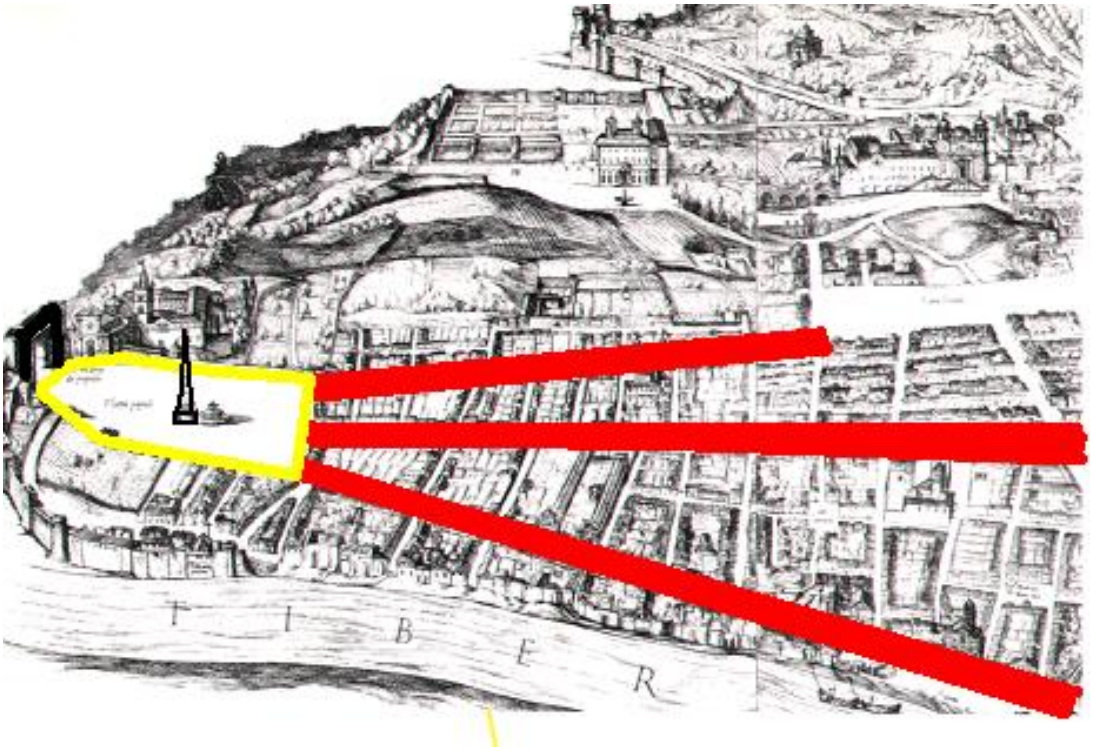


Figure 30: Woodcut of Tempesta for Rome made after death of Sıxtus V (Bacon, 1967:154)

2.2.2.8. Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century European Design

2.2.2.8.1. The Shaft of Copenhagen

King Frederik V of Denmark in 1749 ordered to design development of crown lands in Copenhagen to the architect Eigtved. The place, which is called Amalienborg, consisted of the four palaces placed on the angled corners of the octagon provide an ever-changing series of relationships with one another and also with the equestrian statue in the center of the place and the church dome that terminates the vista on the city side of the square.

The elements that unifies this composition, that binds the city to region as expressed by the port is the shaft of space defined by the street that runs from the river to the church.

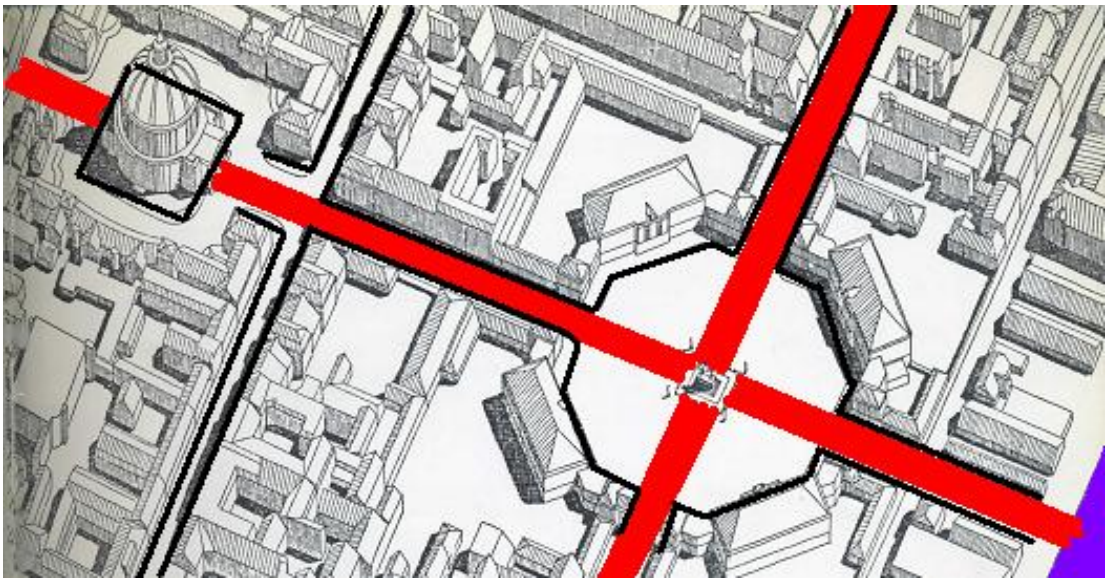


Figure 31: The Perspective drawing of Amalienborg, Copenhagen (Bacon, 1967:171)

It is this element of a shaft of space and its design thrust that provides the generating force of much of the finest eighteenth-century Northern European civic development (Bacon, 1967:157).

Figure 32: The Amalienborg Shaft, Copenhagen

2.2.2.8.2. The Shaft of Greenwich

The main design problem of Greenwich, England was; how to solve the relationship of the proposed great new structure of Royal Naval Collage to the old and relatively small building of Queen's House. The solution was using the principle of two transparent planes as the binding element which

also provides one of the most powerful interrelationships of the structures of two periods.

The architect Sir Christopher Wren took the volume of Queen's House and projected it forward to the river to form the shaft of space which controlled his design. With the space shaft clearly established as a forward thrust of Queen's House, the question then arose of how to join the new composition to the space so created. The problem was solved by the building of two high-drummed domes at the center of gravity of the new group. This widening of the space along the river connected the whole with the movement along the Thames and extended visually the vertical forces of the domes to the river space (Bacon, 1967:158)

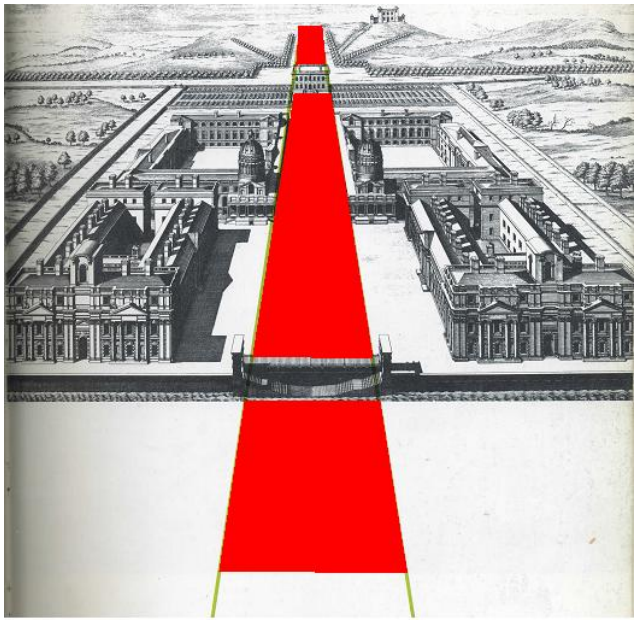


Figure 33: The Shaft of Greenwich (Bacon, 1967:173)

2.2.2.8.3. The Shaft at Nancy

In Nancy, we find a *regional movement system* acting as the generating agent for a fine expression of urban design.

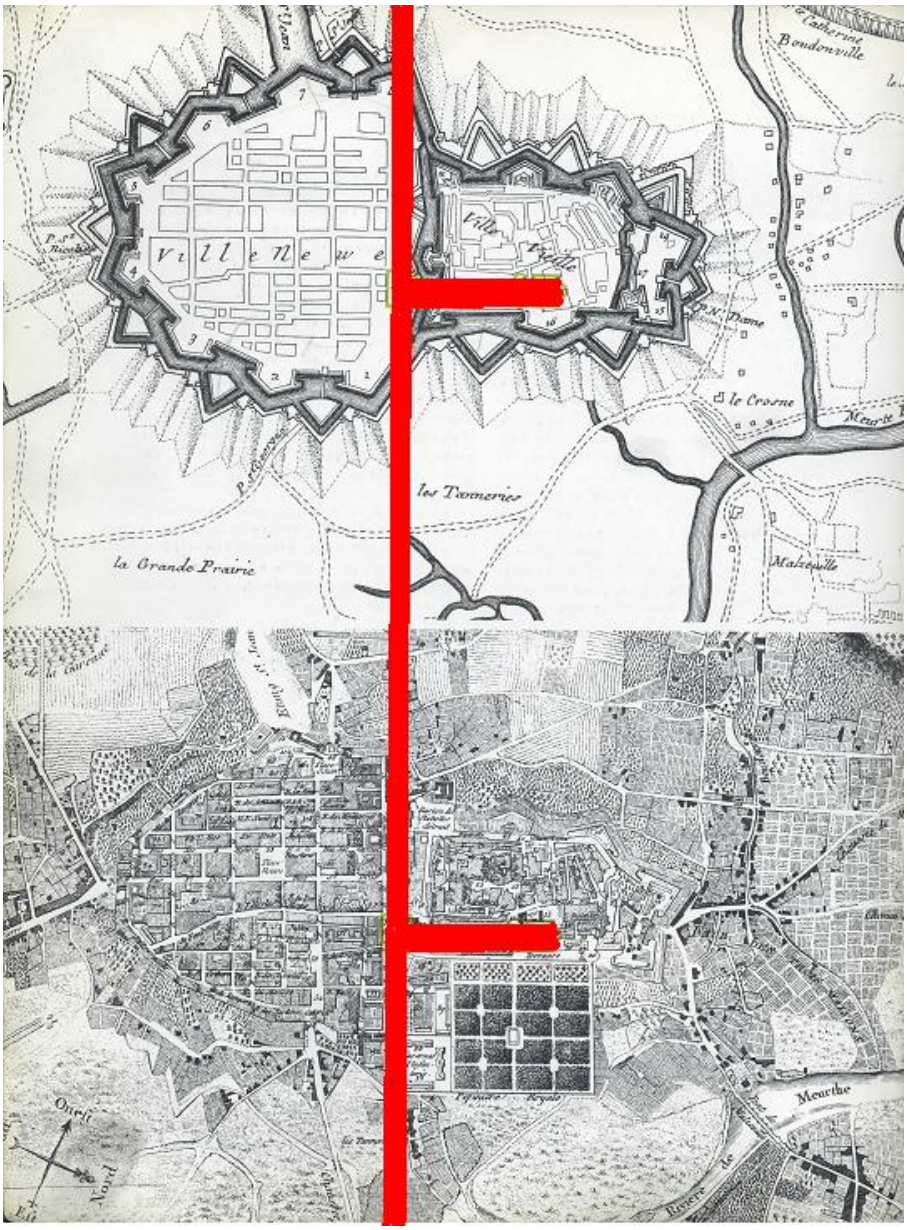


Figure 34: Above: Medieval two-celled Nancy Below: Eighteenth century Nancy (Bacon, 1967:176)

The long street, passing through the “Ville Newe” brings to the *old city* the influence of the *regional countryside* and, conversely, extends the feeling of the city out into the surrounding land.

2.2.2.8.4. Paris

In the case of Paris, a medieval city of 1300 developed around the River Seine, The Louvre Palace outside the walls is the point of origin of the design forces.

In 1740, the great concept of Le Notre, extending the axis of the Tuileries Gardens in the form of the green Champs Elysees has become the dominant design element of Paris.

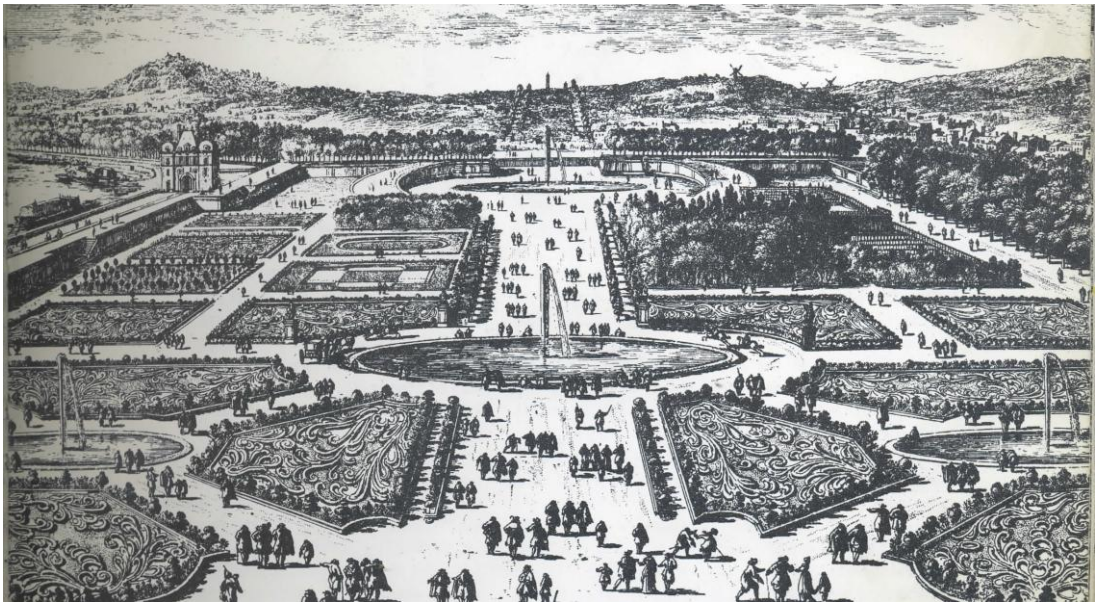


Figure 35: The 17th century Gabriel Perelle engraving of the Tuileries gardens and the embryonic Champs Elysees (Bacon, 1967:187)

An entirely new breadth and freedom have been introduced in the art of civic design. The outward thrust of the movement systems, generated from firm building masses, penetrates farther and farther into the countryside. It stimulates similar axial thrusts originating in the chateaux and palaces about Paris, which also extend and intertwine, creating, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, a form of regional development unique in the history of city-building (Bacon, 1967:174).

Once the idea of the thrust of axial extension had been established by construction and planting on the ground, it became a dominant element in the later development of Paris and was applied with much skill by many designers over the years.

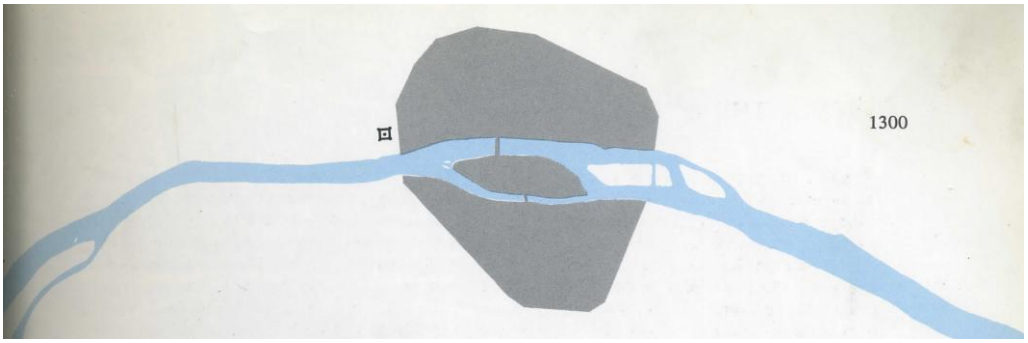


Figure 36: Paris 1300. Louvre Palace outside the walls, shown in black, is the point of origin of the design forces. (Bacon, 1967:189)

Figure 37: Paris 1600. White line indicates the walls of 1300. To the east in black is shown Bastille, and in green the row of trees planted along the wall, the first indication of the great tree-lined boulevard system to follow. The old Louvre is completely surrounded by city development. Outside the new walls to the west is the Tuileries Palace. (Bacon, 1967:189)

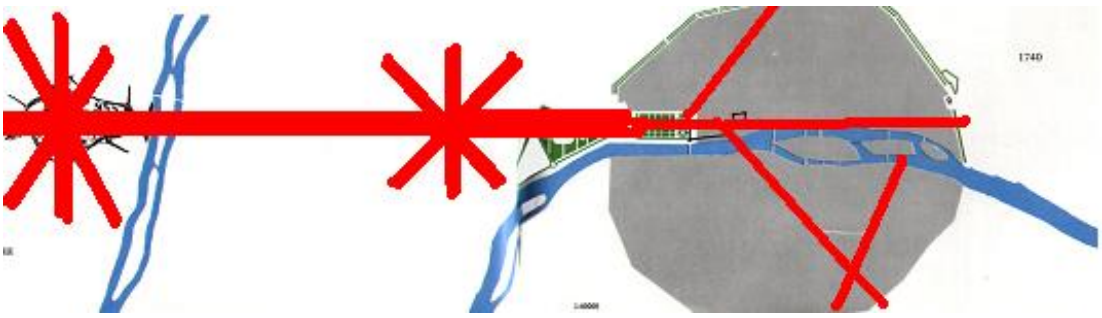


Figure 38: Paris 1740. The great concept of Le Notre, extending the axis of the Tuileries Gardens in the form of the green Champ Elysees (Bacon, 1967:188-189)

The river Seine provided the central spine for design growth. From it were extended perpendicularly a series of axial developments, notably the esplanade of the Invalides and the Champ de Mars with the Eiffel Tower. These developments were gradually interlaced and interconnected with the

Champs Elysees and other boulevard extensions, forming the beginning of a regional network.

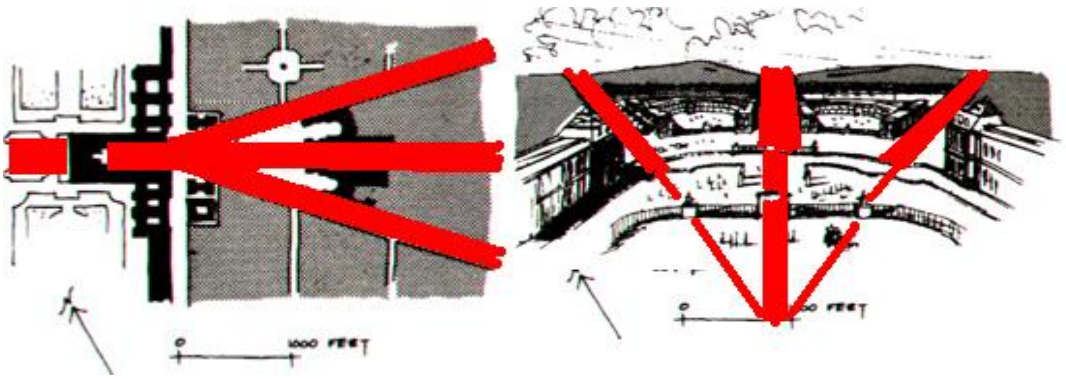


Figure 39: The Place d'Armes at Versailles and Versailles, looking eastward across the Place d'Armes from the palace. . (Spreiregen, 1965:21)

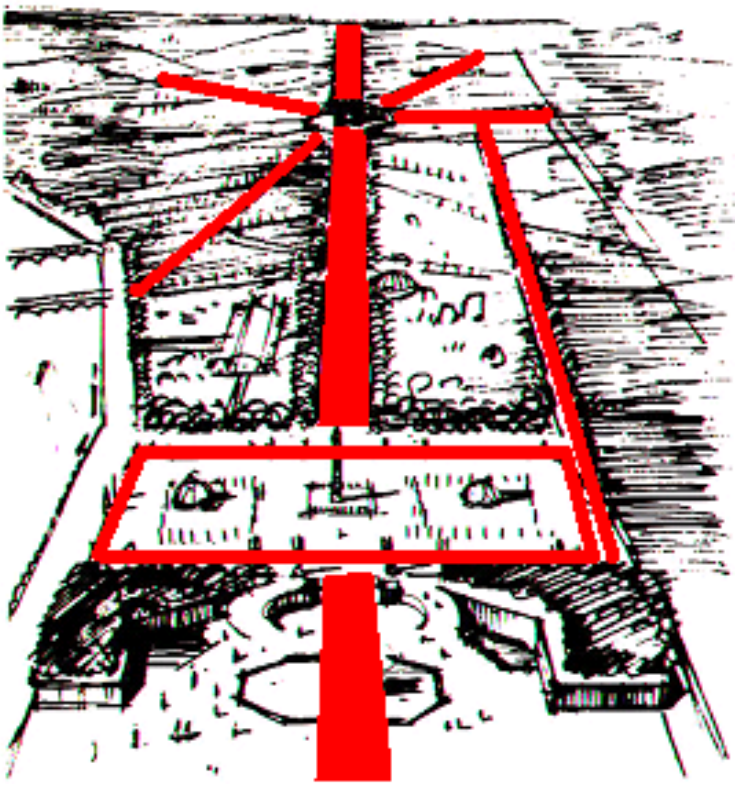


Figure 40: The Champ Elysees, Paris.

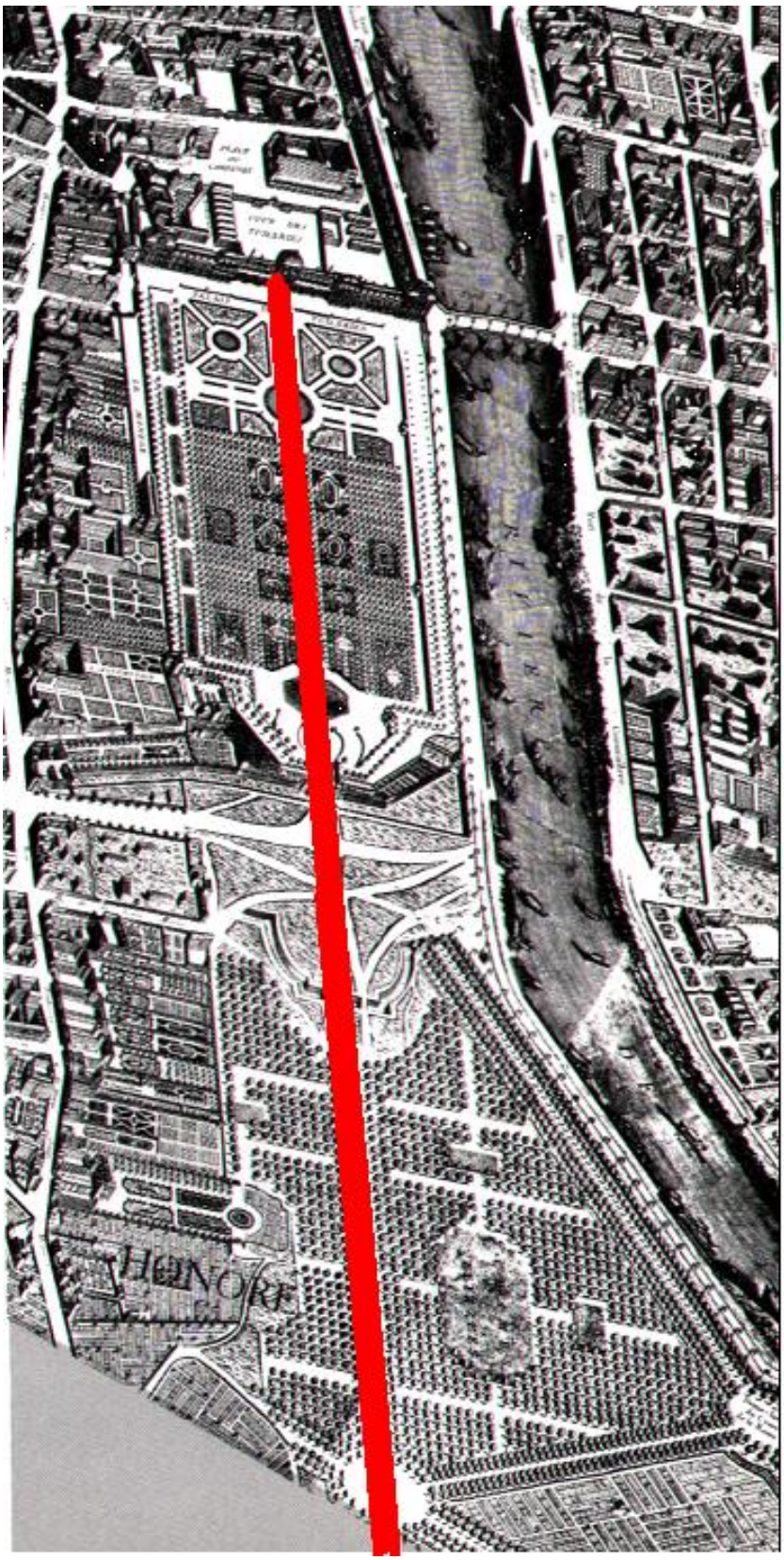


Figure 41: A section of Micheal Etienne Turgot map of 1734-1739 (Bacon, 1967:191)

Napoleon I set about to clear out the old structures in the area became the courtyard of the Louvre and he ordered the realigning and completion of streets in neighboring sections. But it was Napoleon III and the achievements of Baron Georges Haussmann that led to the reintegration of the heart of Paris and strengthening of its interior structure on a scale appropriate with the forces of regional expansion (Bacon, 1967:179).

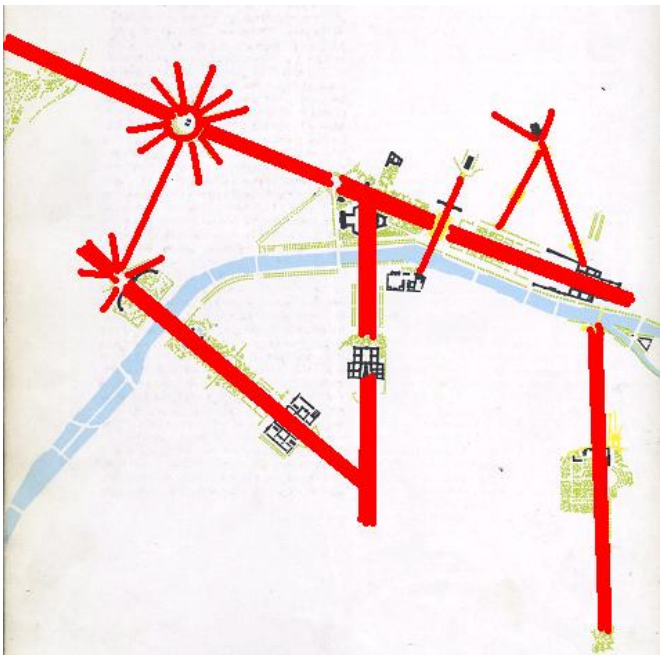


Figure 42: Design Structure of Paris (Bacon, 1967:192)

Figure 43: Paris Plan along the Camps Elysees from the Louvre Palace at the right to the La Defense at the left (Bacon,1967:192)

2.2.2.8.5. Saint Petersburg

Saint Petersburg in Russia is one of the few great cities built in its entirety after Renaissance had reached their full maturity.

When Peter the Great decided he was tired of Moscow and wanted to create an entirely new capital for Russia, and in 1712 announced it would be on the banks of the Neva River, Paris had already achieved a dynamic scale.

In contrast to Paris, where the design forces burst outward from the old city, in Saint Petersburg the lines of force thrust inward from the regional countryside.

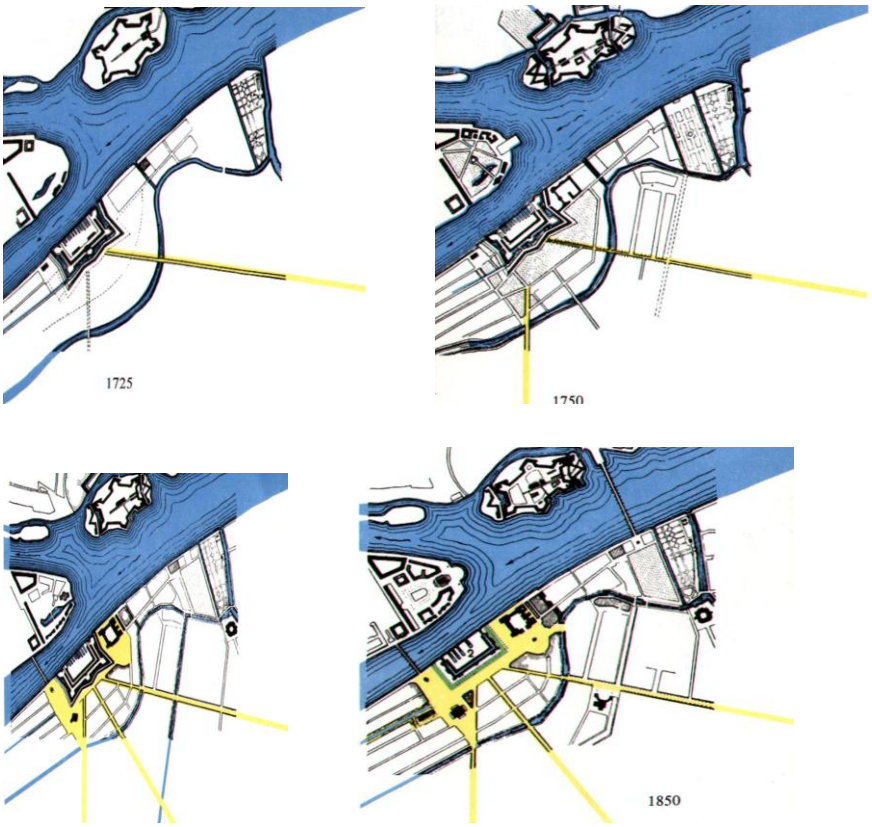


Figure 44: Saint Petersburg (above left 1725. right 1750, below left 1800, right 1850) shafts from the Admiralty. (Bacon, 1967:196-197)

As it is shown on the maps of evolution of the city consecutively dated to1725, 1750, 1800, and1850 the three converging roads have been carried through to a definite junction with the Admiralty. The interaction of the cross-movements of this highly dynamic and extraordinarily shaped space with the extreme formality created by the symmetrical convergence of the three axes meeting at the Admiralty tower is one of the wonders of urban design (Bacon, 1967:182-183).

St. Petersburg had been planned as a Linear City. The city had developed not only by the River of Volga but also the three shafts from the Admiralty, which intersected the city, connected the countryside to the new capital.

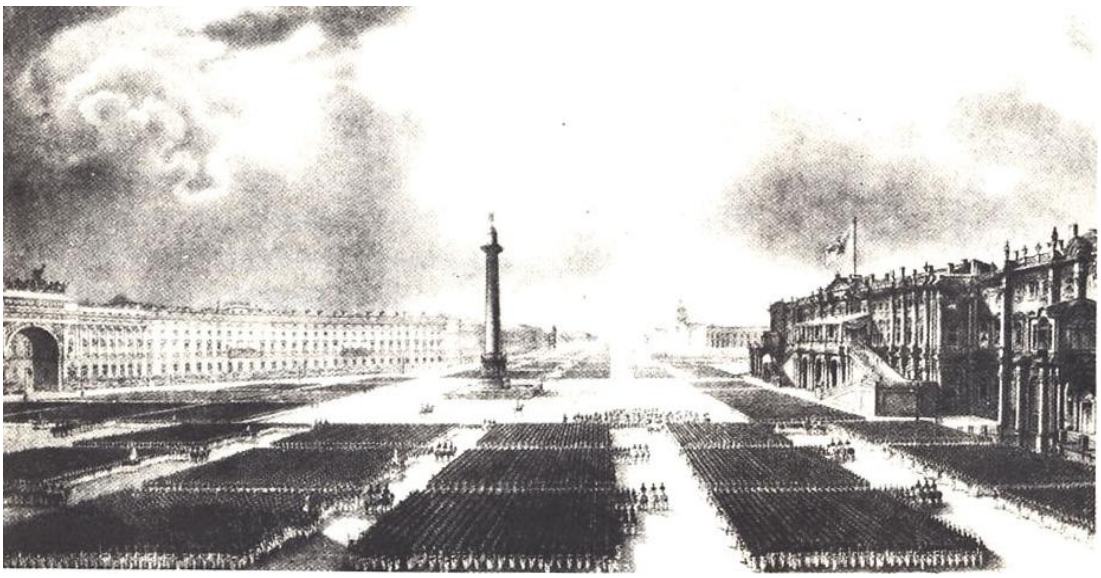


Figure 45: The Central squares of St. Petersburg after their reconstruction in 1840. The superhuman scale was designed to display power. (Lynch, 1981:162)

2.2.2.8.6. John Nash and London

In 1811 architect John Nash attempted to introduce an ambitious concept in London. Nash made a plan for Regent Street, Regent Park, and Park Crescent and worked on its implementation for nearly twenty-five years. He wanted to create a fine group of buildings around a park, all at the edge of the city, connected to the center of the city by a grand avenue. In essence it was a satellite town for London. The park and the residential area turned out admirably, but the avenue suffered from a number of compromises which resulted in awkward bends and conflicting architecture (Spreiregen, 1965:24).

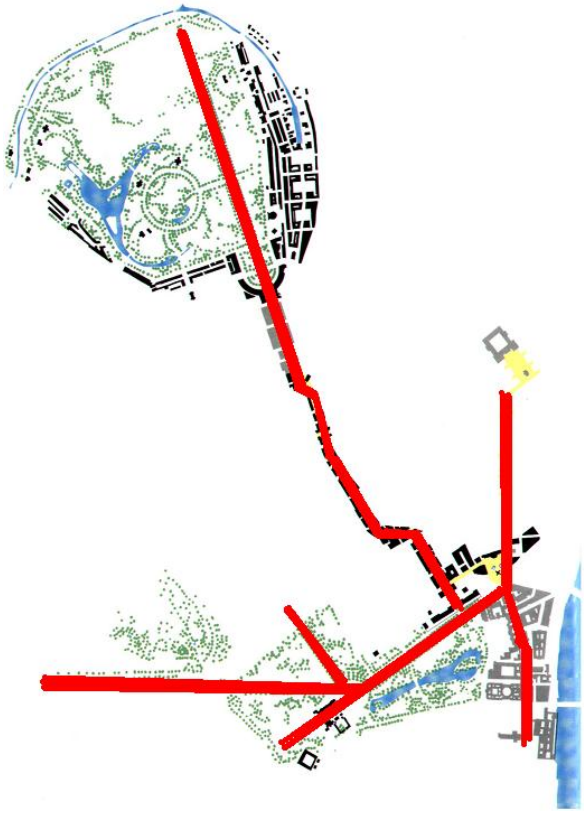


Figure 46: The design structure of Regent Street, Regent Park and Park Crescent. (Bacon, 1967:.200).

2.2.2.8.7. Savannah

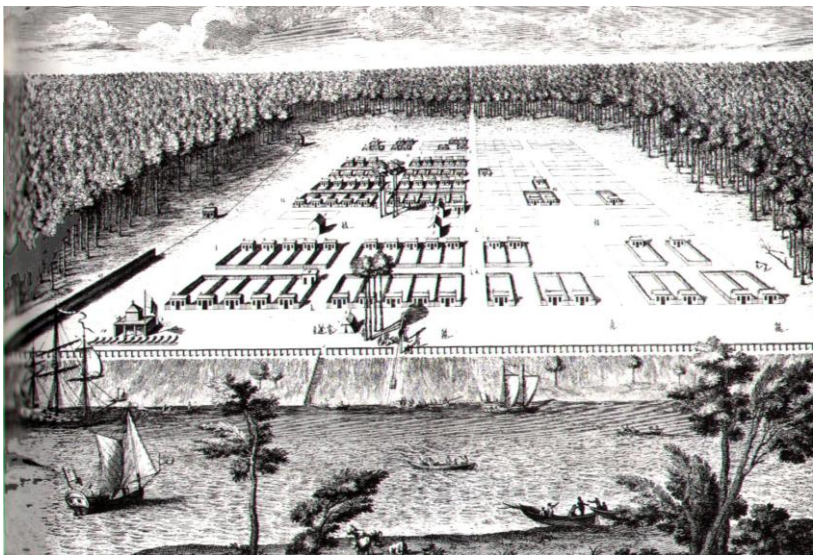


Figure 47: The 1734 engraving of Savannah. (Bacon, 1967:219)

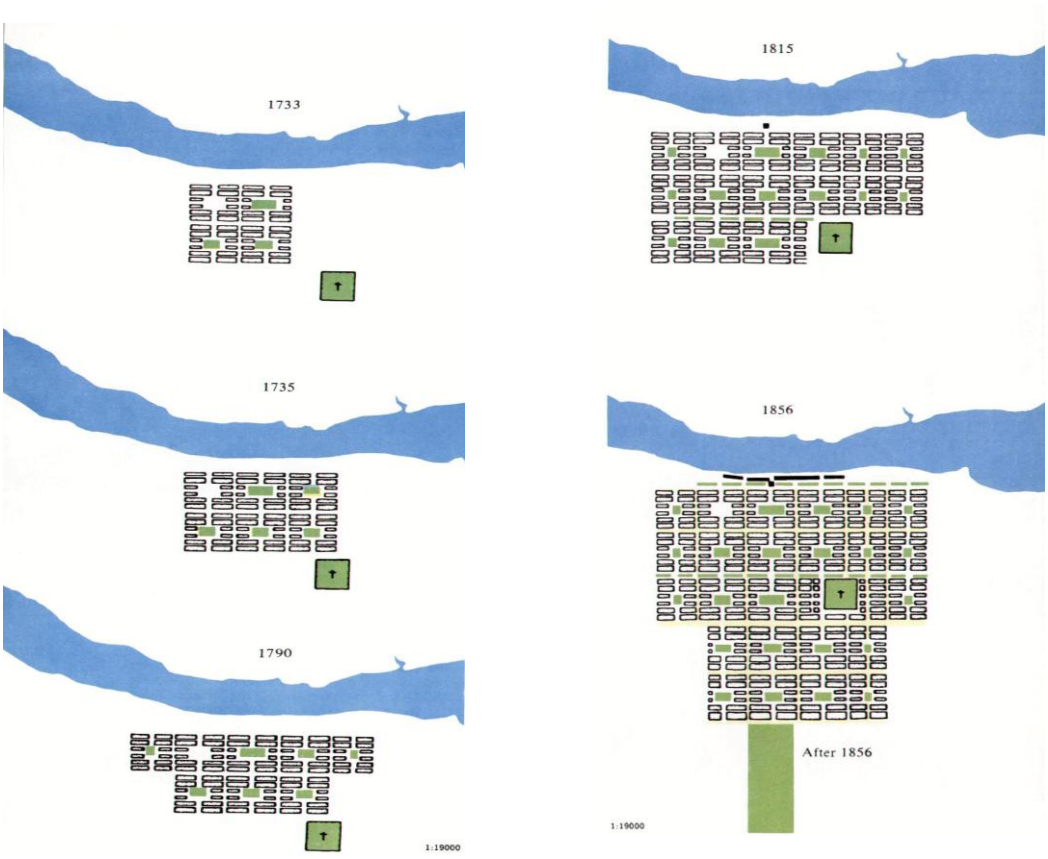


Figure 48: Savannah Design structure. (Bacon, 1967:219-220)

It is amazing that a colony, struggling against the most elemental problems of survival in a wilderness, should be able to produce a plan so exalted that it remains one of the finest diagrams for city organization and growth in existence.

Extending from the river is the thrust of space of the highway between the four square-centered communities. This projects itself deep into the forest, providing the spine for the future extension of the city and a system of such order and clarity that it became the controlling element for the growth of Savannah for the next 120 years.

This is one of the clearest examples of city growth by design, and of restructuring following a period of growth by accretion, a design extension consisting integrally of land planning and architecture.

2.2.2.8.8. Design for Washington

The plan for Washington D.C. was drawn by Major Pierre Charles L'Enfant in 1791. A network of radial streets, which connect the principal buildings and the commanding features of the land, was laid over an irregularly varying rectangular grid. This hybrid plan, coupled with the federal government's inability to implement his proposed controls, has produced a city of fine vistas and confusing intersections (Lynch, 1981:282)

Figure 49: The plan for Washington D.C., as drawn by Major Pierre Charles L'Enfant in 1791. (Lynch, 1981:283)

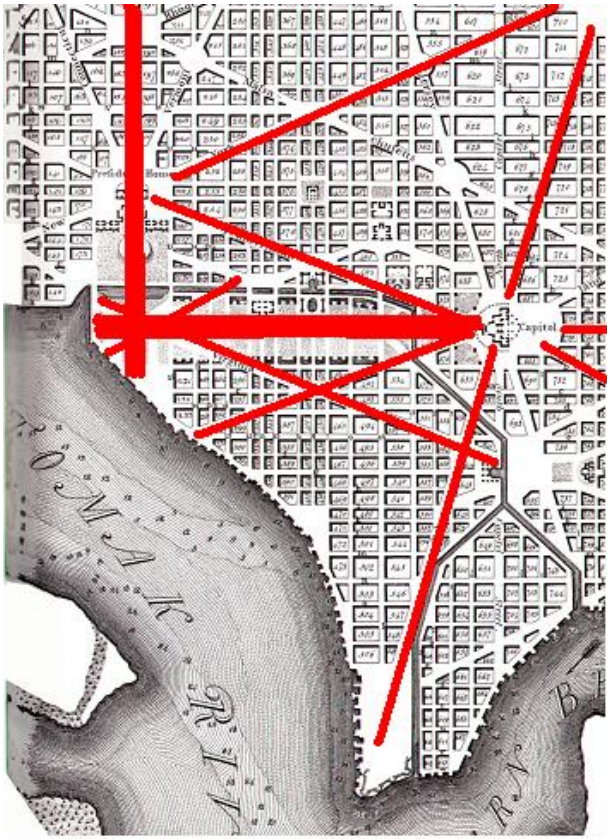


Figure 50: The 1792 plan of Andrew Ellicott (Bacon, 1967:223)

2.2.2.8.9. Canberra

The new Commonwealth of Australia government, established on New Year's Day 1901, immediately started to fulfill its remit to find a new capital within New South Wales outside a 100-mile radius of Sydney. In 1908 it chose Canberra and the site was set aside as Australian Capital Territory; in 1911 it organized an international competition to plan the city.

Remarkably, it has all come out like that, with a few more changes of cast. The play has been rewritten to give a bigger role to the parliament, which in 1988, Australia's bicentennial, was moved up to a new home on Capitol Hill. An elegantly monumental art gallery and national library have joined the courts of justice at front of stage. Visually, that right edge of the triangle has become the dominant feature: it leads the eye back from the municipal-commercial center, past a traffic circle, via a broad highway across Lake Burley Griffin and so up to the new Parliament House, low-slung and half-buried into the hill; low-key government, this. On the lake itself, strong decorative vertical features – the carillon clock at extreme left, the huge Captain Cook memorial water-jet close to the central axis, the telecom tower at extreme right – define and frame the stage. The heavily neo-classical Anzac Parade, a post-World War One war memorial and hence a very early feature, forms the central processional aisle to the auditorium. Most notably, because the actual building came so late, the architecture is of the 1970s and 1980s:

in style it is international modern respectful. It lacks some of the zest of Niemeyer's Brasilia; it also lacks its monumental excesses. It is all exceedingly grand, dignified, elegant, yet (the Parker-Unwin word) reposeful; it will soon rank with Washington as one of the world's great monumental capitals, an eloquent testimony to the wisdom of making haste slowly (Hall, 2002:208-210).

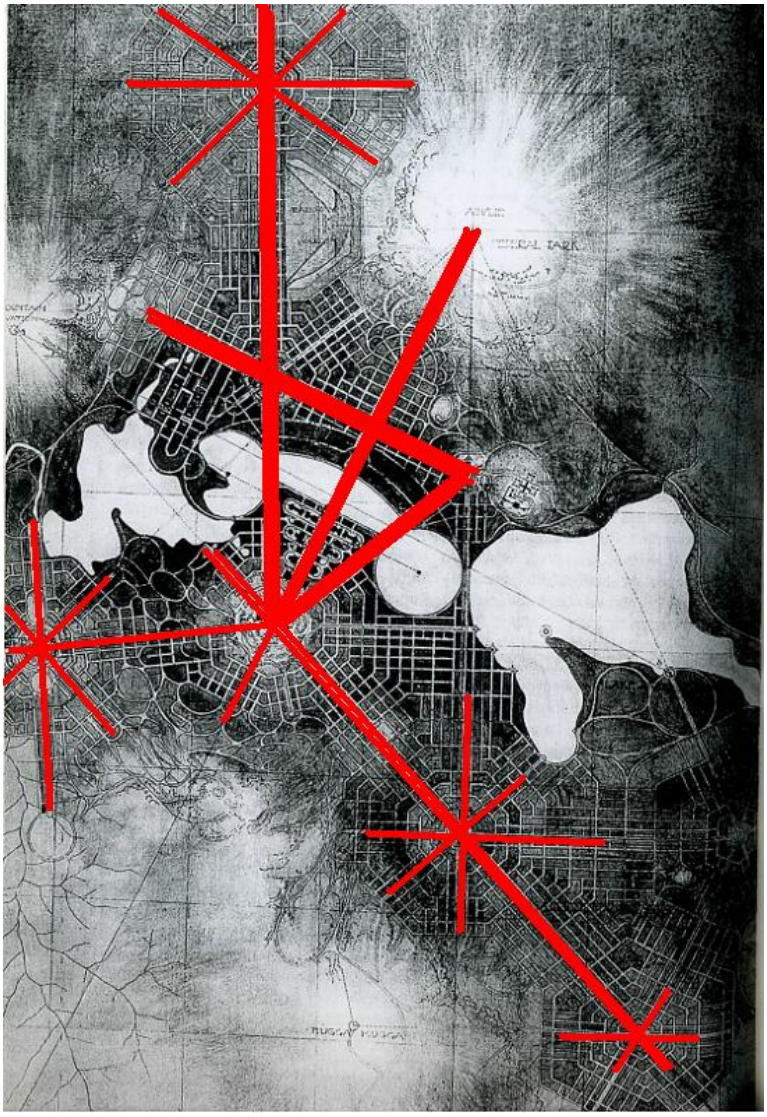


Figure 51: Griffin's City and Environs plan for the federal capital (Freestone, 2007)

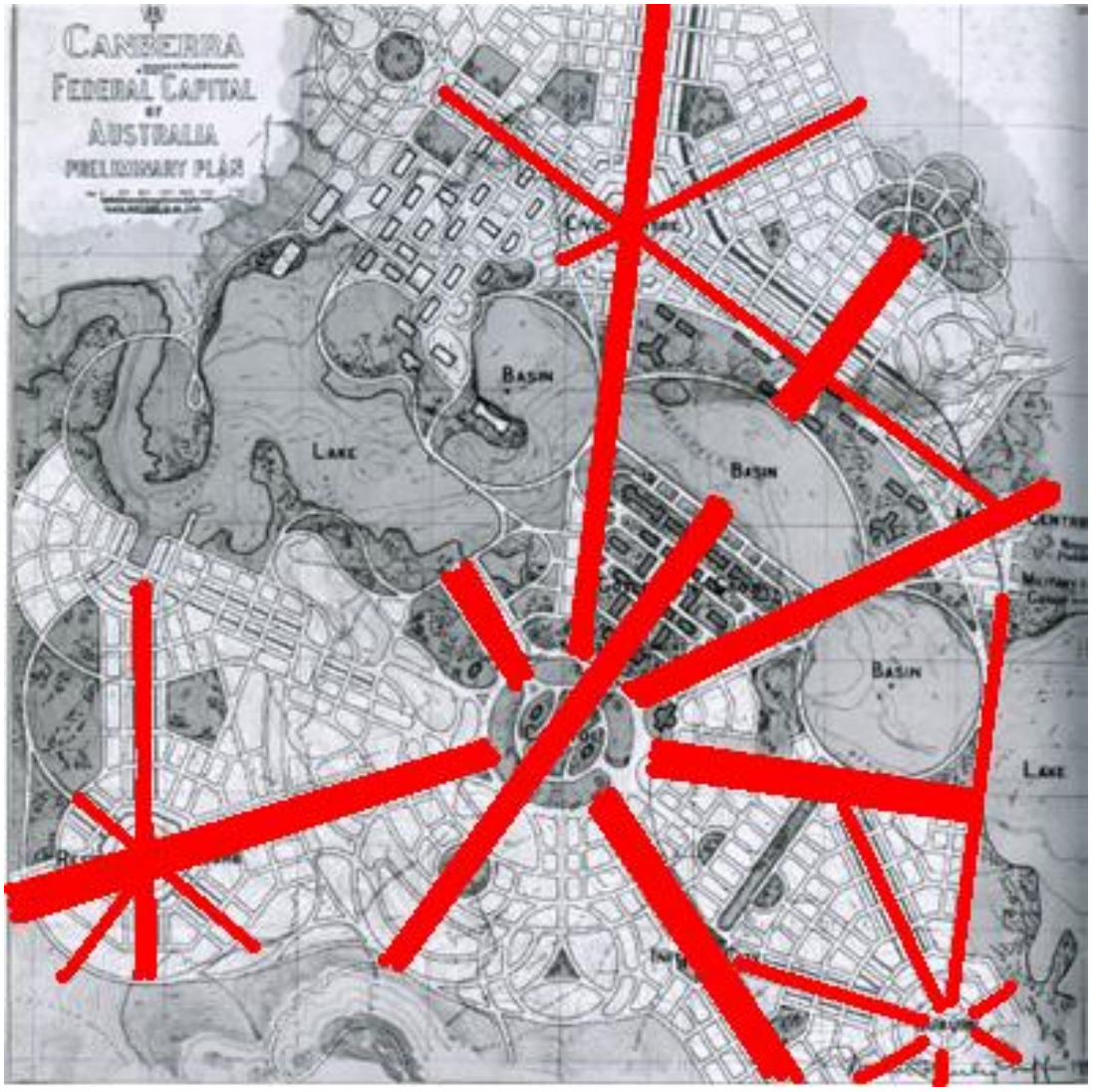


Figure 52: Griffin preliminary plan (Freestone, 2007)

2.2.2.8.10. Great Dictators' Cities

The return of the City Beautiful to Europe was altogether less happy. It came in the age of the Great Dictators, and it too was theatre: bad melodrama. Mussolini's Rome was the curtain-warmer: "Mussolini *was* the chief architect of Fascism as a political system, and he did turn out a prodigious amount of building, including the construction of thirteen towns and more than sixty rural settlements *ex novo* in Italy between 1928 and 1940. For him,

great public works would not only recall the triumphs of imperial and medieval Italy; they would surpass them. But fascist ideology concerning the city was in many ways close to Nazi: only rural family life was truly healthy; the metropolis was the origin of most things bad, including labor unrest, revolution and socialism.

The fascist town plans followed Roman models, with modified orthogonal grids, normally with four quadrants and a rectangular piazza as the civic center.

Within the metropolis, however, the role of planning was to be monumental: to rediscover the glories of Rome by removing most of the traces of the subsequent two millennia. Mussolini gave his instructions to the 1929 Congress of the Housing and Town Planning Federation in Rome:

> My ideas are clear. My orders are precise. Within five years, Rome must appear marvelous to all the people of the world – vast, orderly, powerful, as in the time of the empire of Augustus … you shall create vast spaces around the Theater of Marcellus, the Capitoline Hill, and the Pantheon. All that has grown around them in the centuries of decadence must disappear.

Germany's cities, and above all Berlin, were to perform a psychological, a quasi-religious, even a magical function as gathering-points for vast public ceremonies, while the productive population were removed to *Lebensraum* in the country-side. Appropriately, the plan would have involved unpar-

alleled destruction of the old medieval town centers to make way for ceremonial axes, assembly areas, the halls, vast towers and sprawling administrative complexes, at a bill exceeding 100 billion marks.

Hitler had failed to enter the Vienna academy to study art, and was prone to repeat to Speer, again and again, “How I wish I had been an architect.” He had an amazingly detailed knowledge of earlier City Beautiful plans for Vienna and Paris; he knew the exact measurements of the Champs Elysees, and was obsessionally determined that Berlin should have an east-west axis two and a half times as a long; the disposition of buildings – huge and monumental, with wide spaces between them – recalls the Vienna Ring remembered from his youth.

“He would look at the plans, but really only glance at them, and after a few minutes would ask with palpable boredom: ‘Where do you have the plans for the grand avenue:’” Running between the two planned central railroad stations, with Great Hall – 726 feet high, 850 feet across the dome – at its center point, this north-south avenue was to spell out in stone “the political, military, and economic power of Germany.” In the center sat the absolute ruler of the Reich, and in his immediate proximity, as the highest expression of his power, was the great domed hall which was to be the dominant structure of the future Berlin.” Each time he saw the plans again, he would repeat: “My only wish, Speer, is to see these buildings. In 1950 we’ll organize a world’s fair” (Hall, 2002: 210-214).

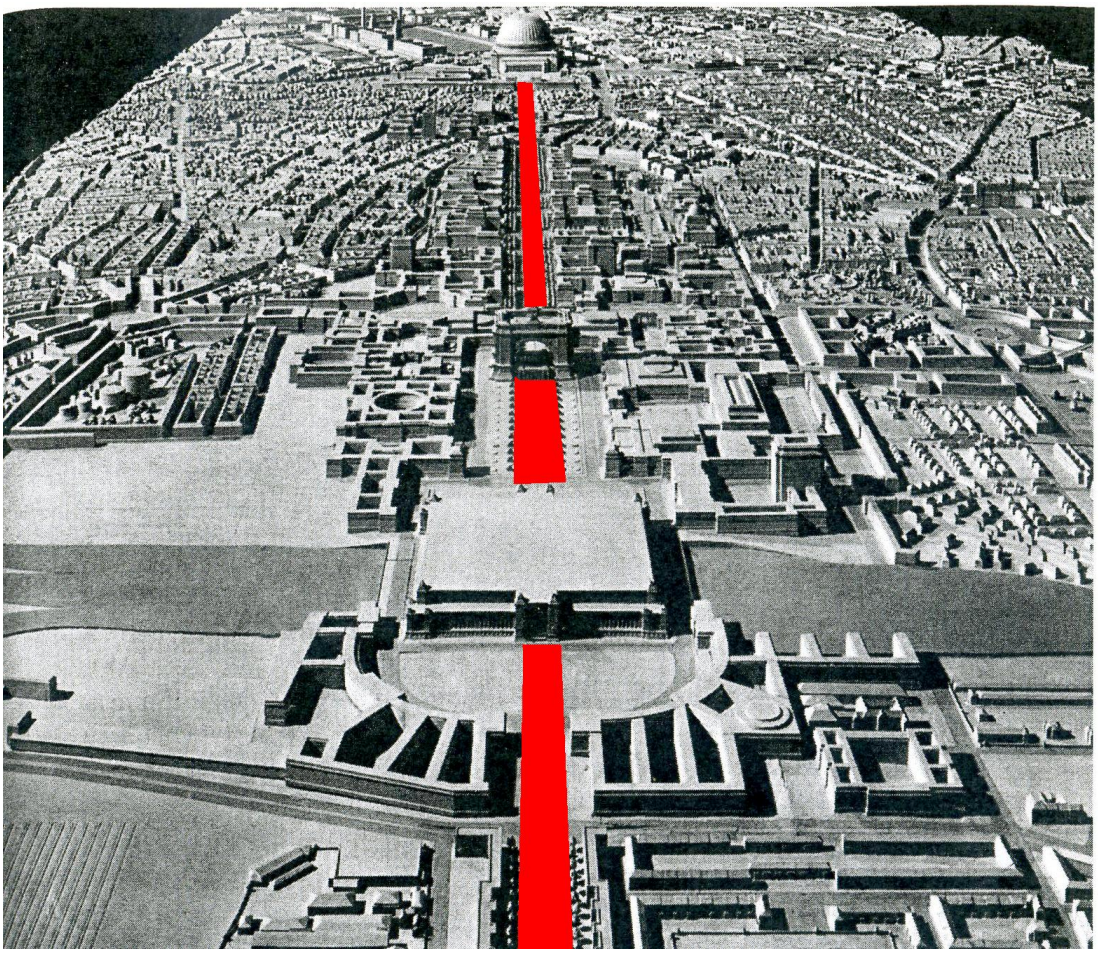


Figure 53: Speer's monumental north-south way leads via the Triumphal Arch to the gigantic domed Kupferhalle. None of it even started.

2.2.2.8.11. Brasilia

The plan of Brasilia was variously described as an airplane, bird, or dragonfly: the body, or fuselage, was a monumental axis for the principal public buildings and offices, the wings were the residential and other areas. In the first, uniform office blocks were to line a wide central mall leading to the complex of governmental buildings.

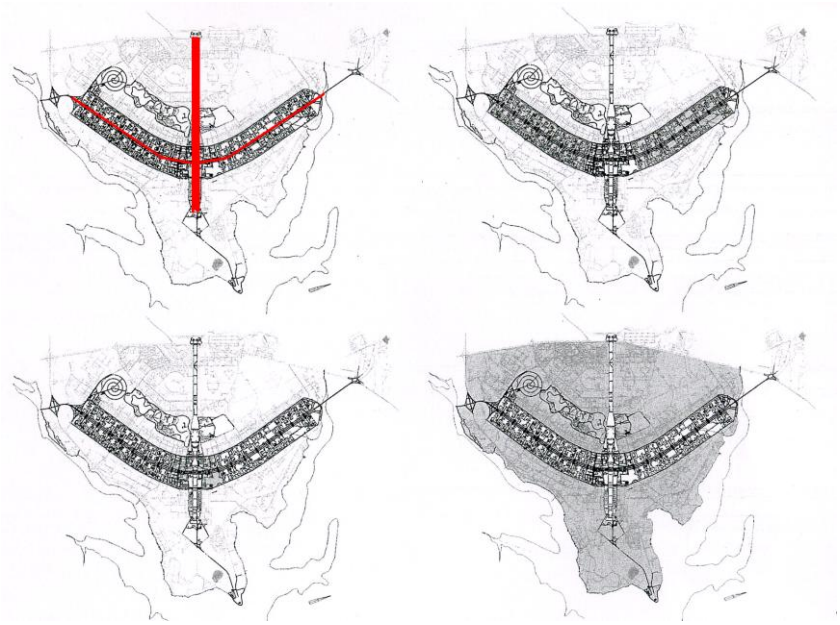


Figure 54: Plans of Brasilia showing areas of the four scales a. Monumental b. Residential c. Concentrated d. Bucolic scale

Of the four conversation scales in Brasilia, the monumental corresponds to the Monumental Axis. This part of the city houses the seat of the federal government and its administrative apparatus, the ministries, the presidential palace, the National Congress, and the Supreme Court, all symbols of the nation's capital. At the eastern end of the axis, the presidential palace, Supreme Court building, and National Congress flank the plaza that Costa named "Plaza of the Three Powers". At the western end, around the Buriti Plaza, is where city government, including the governor's palace, is located (Costa, 2005:83-84).

CHAPTER 3

URBAN DEVELOPMENT HISTORY OF TIRANA, CAPITAL CITY OF ALBANIA

3.1. From Foundation to 1920

Tirana is the capital city of Albania since January 20, 1920. Beginning with the declaration as the capital city, Tirana has become the biggest and the most populated city of this small country. According to the Municipality of Tirana the population in 2007 was 607467. It is approximately 20% of whole population of Albania. The largest city of Albania not only has no long past as some of the other cities of the country like Durres, Berat, Gjirokaster, Kruje, Shkoder, Elbasan, Korçe etc., but also has a very modest history compared to most of the European capitals.

The first urban development in Tirana emerged in 1614 by the Ottoman governor of the Petrela Castle which is 12 km far away, with the construction of Sulejman Pasha Mosque (Xhamia e Vjeter) which is at the center of the present structure of the city. As a legendary story Sulejman Pasha while riding his horse at this area liked the situation of Tirana fields near the Lana River and decided to develop a small settlement for himself. With the erection of this nucleus some feudal landlords and their relatives made some

other buildings which included a bakery, a Turkish bath (hamam) and an inn. These three facilities influenced the expansion of the commercial center.

Although it seems to be very spontaneous decision and development of a city, the truth was not as innocent as it seems. The choices of these very important buildings were serving for creating a new city: The mosque was for religiously taking the decisions of laws in the land ownership of third parties, bakery was for gathering a population which was not farming, and bath was for a civil life of city (Mehilli, 2012:10).

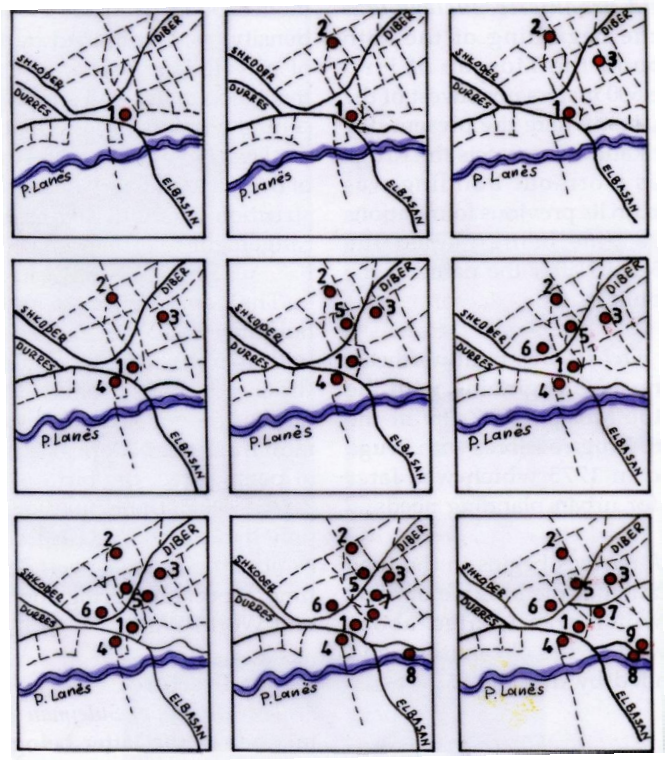


Figure 55: The Native names and Places of the old mosques that served as nucleuses: 1. Sulejman Pasha 2. Fires 3. Zajmit 4. Hetemit 5. Stermasit 6. Karapicit, Kokon 7. Berxollit 8. Mujos 9. Reçit

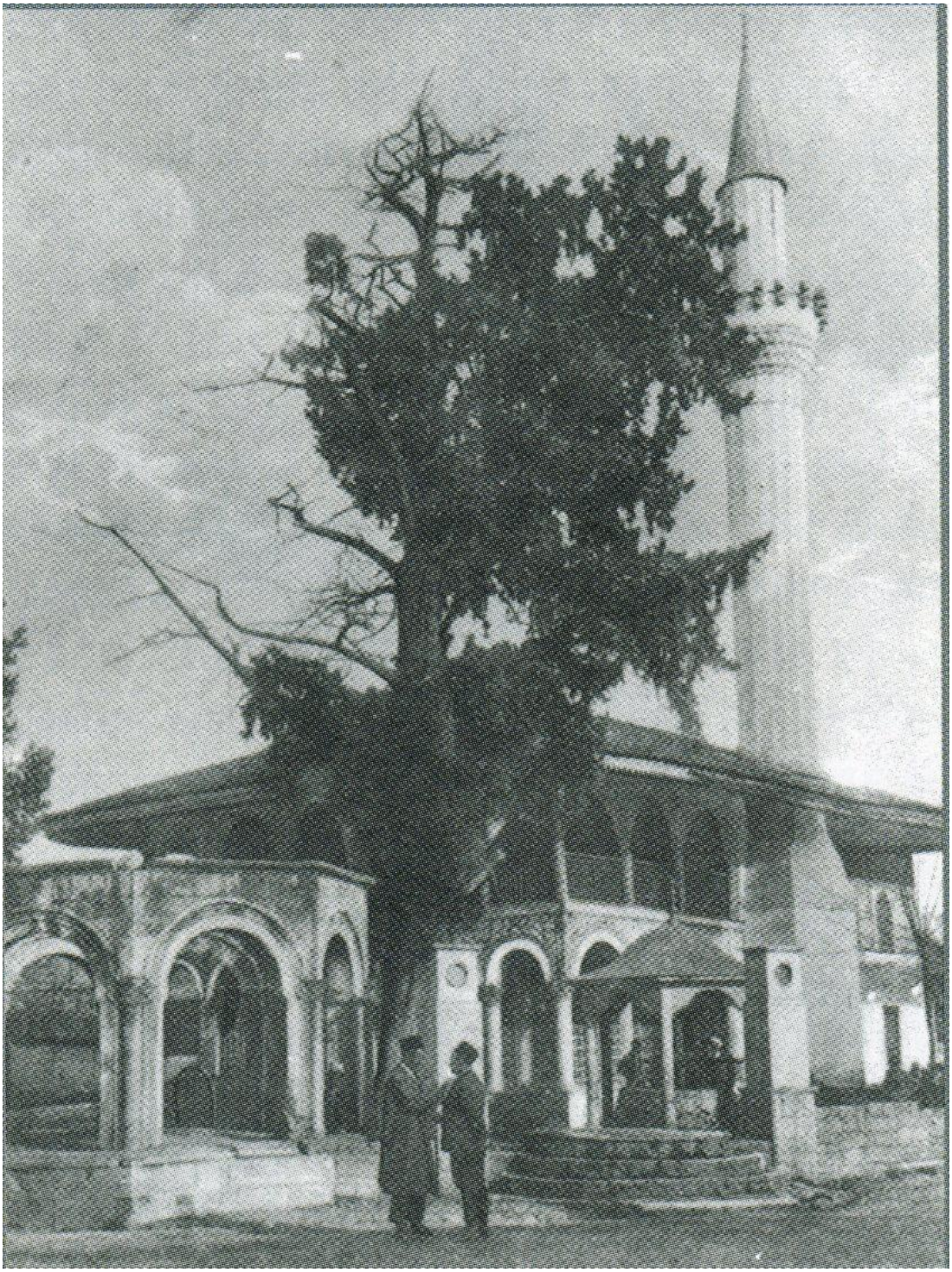


Figure 56: Mosque Sulejman Pasha. This mosque does not exist today .

In the case of Tirana, the mosques have played a positive role on urban development of the city. After the construction of Sulejman Pasha

Mosque the second center was erected 600 meters northwest of the first nucleus at the beginning of the 18th century around the Mosque of Fire. In 1775 the third center was built northeast of the first nucleus by the Mosque of Zajmi. The forth center was erected 200 meters west of the Sulejman Pasha Mosque by the construction of Haxhi Ethem Mosque (Et'hem Beu Mosque) in 1789 and a clock tower in 1839. Close to the first nucleus at different parts of the new town, other clusters were formed with a mosque at their centers like Stermas Mosque in 1840, Kokonozi and Berxolli in the 19th century, Karapici in 1858, Mujo, Reçi, etc. which created an urban planning landscape of irregular layout as conditioned by the existence of private land ownership. Feudal fragmentation of the land and the absence of a central administration capable of enforcing laws have conditioned the emergence of irregular and scattered constructions without plan. The feudal landowners had a great influence at these prosperous lands in the middle of the country. According to the book of Kristo Frasheri, the foundation of Tirana has an interesting history:

While Sulejman Pasha was crossing through the place where founded Tirana after awhile, he loved this forest full of water run through this open plane. Sulejman who was attracted by this natural beauty took a decision to come down from Mullet in order to erect a city. However the valley with the forest and the rivers had another feudal owner who had come some time ago

from Peqini and settled down to his tower in Selite near Sauk village. After several times Sulejman Pasha tried to buy this land and the other feudal did not accept to sell it, Sulejman Pasha Bargjini with more powerful friends in Istanbul had a better situation and decided to use it. He ordered to cut the forest for timber and build a foundation for a mosque and a bakery. That is how the conflict began between these two feudal and landlord who thought that he was the legal owner of these lands, attacked the masons and destroy the walls of the mosque. That was enough for Sulejman Pasha, although he was wrong to conquer the land of another owner, used the attack of the landlord to mosque and courted him in Istanbul. The High Court of Istanbul took a decision and sentenced the landlord with dead. Thus Sulejman Pasha gained the opportunity to finish the construction of buildings he had begun (Frasheri, 2004:56-57).

The buildings of first nucleus unfortunately have been destroyed over time, mostly during and after the Second World War, with the beginning of Communist Era former president Enver Hoxha's atheism strategies. The Mosque of Ethem Beu is the only mosque situated at the historical center of the town that had survived the destructions of wars and times.

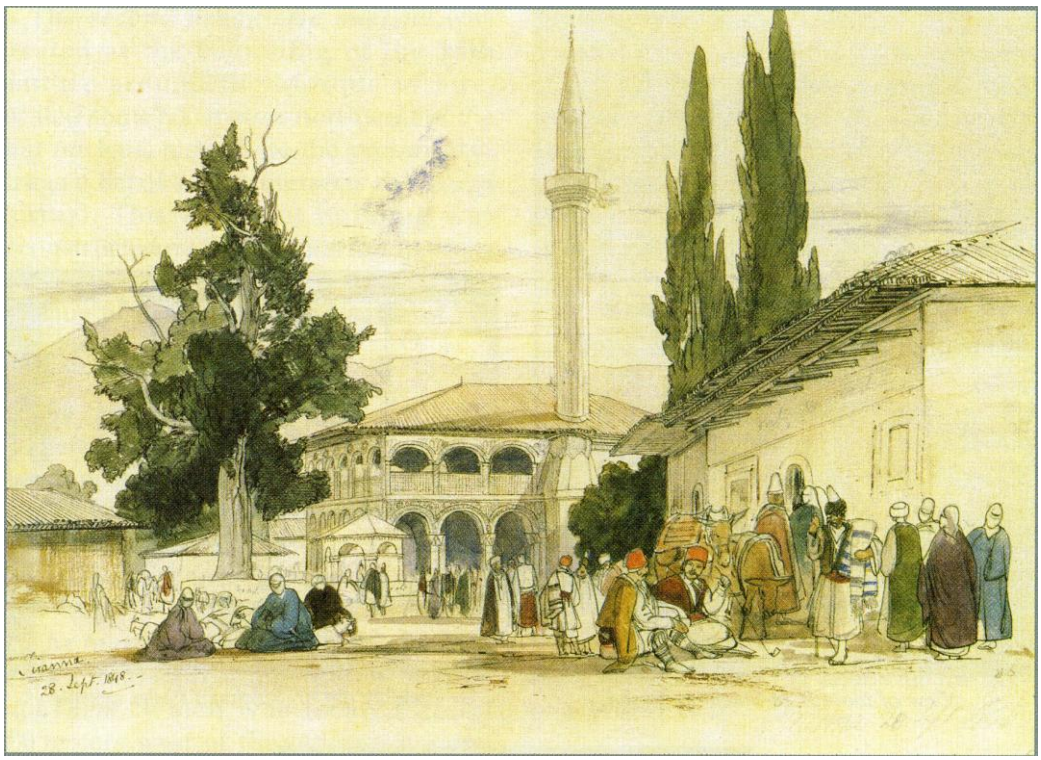
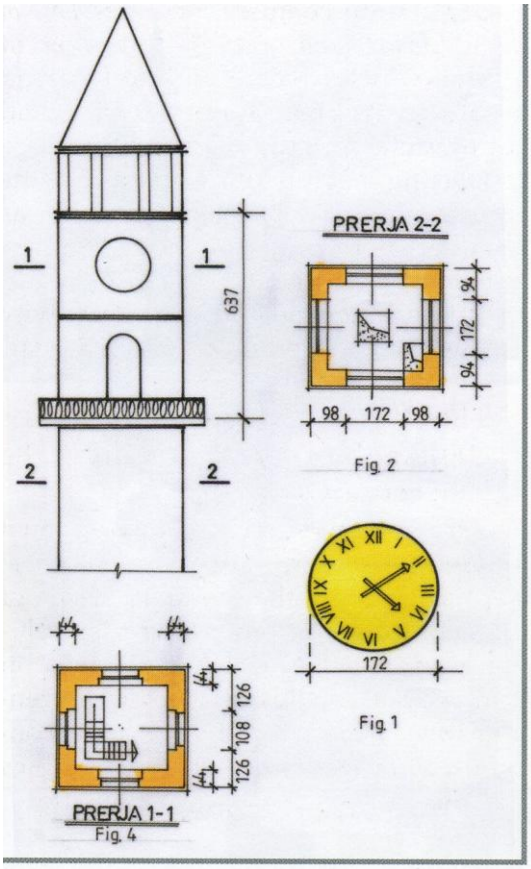


Figure 57: View of Tirana painted by Eduard Lear on 1848

Figure 58: Tirana Clock Tower and Ethem Beu Mosque



Plan lay out and section of Tirana clock tower

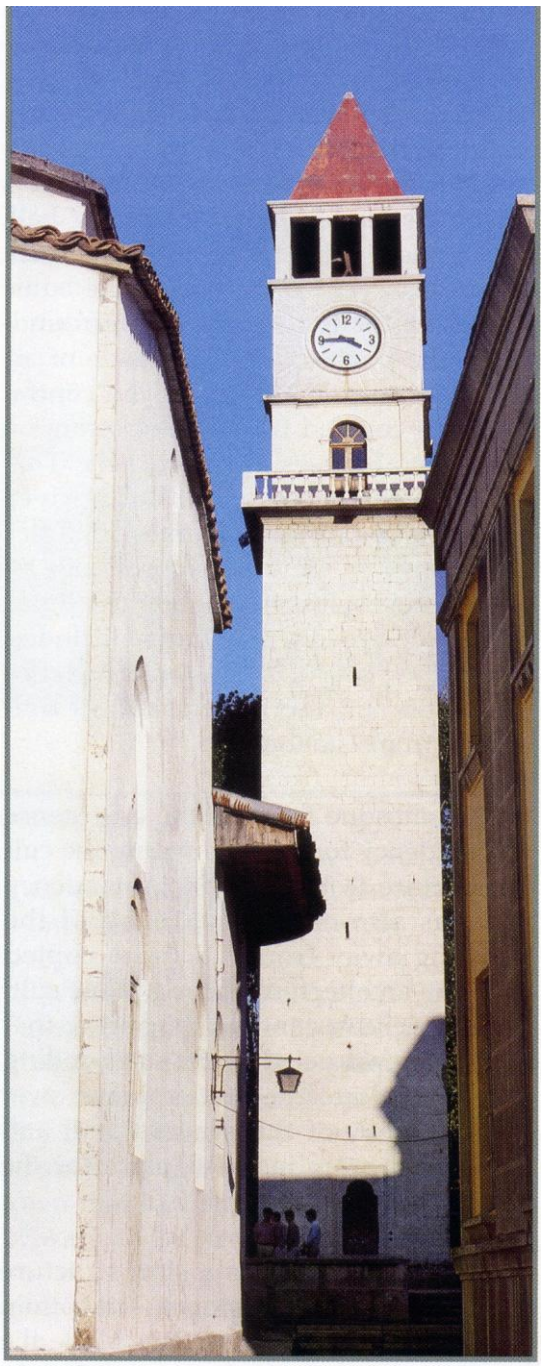


Figure 59: Tirana Clock Tower and Ethem Beu Mosque. The mosque of Ethem Beu and Clock Tower (Kulla e Sahatit) shaped the vertical silhouette and image of the city. These historical landmarks still are the most important elements of the central business district spine and the core center of this spine.

Figure 60: The Old Bazaar

The construction of the Clock Tower resembles the achievement in the field of economic and social development of the town. In the 18th century the small town became a commercial center with the contribution of the rich merchant families which were the landlords of the town as well. Until the first quarter of the 19th century, the town extended around its hub, where the bazaar and the two most distinguished mosques -Ethem Beu and Sulejman Pasha- were established. The main streets opening in radial shape would connect the town's core with the neighborhoods scarcely inhabited.

From 18th century until the beginning of 20th century the structure of the city of Tirana consisted of two main areas: The dwelling zone and the commercial and economic zone.

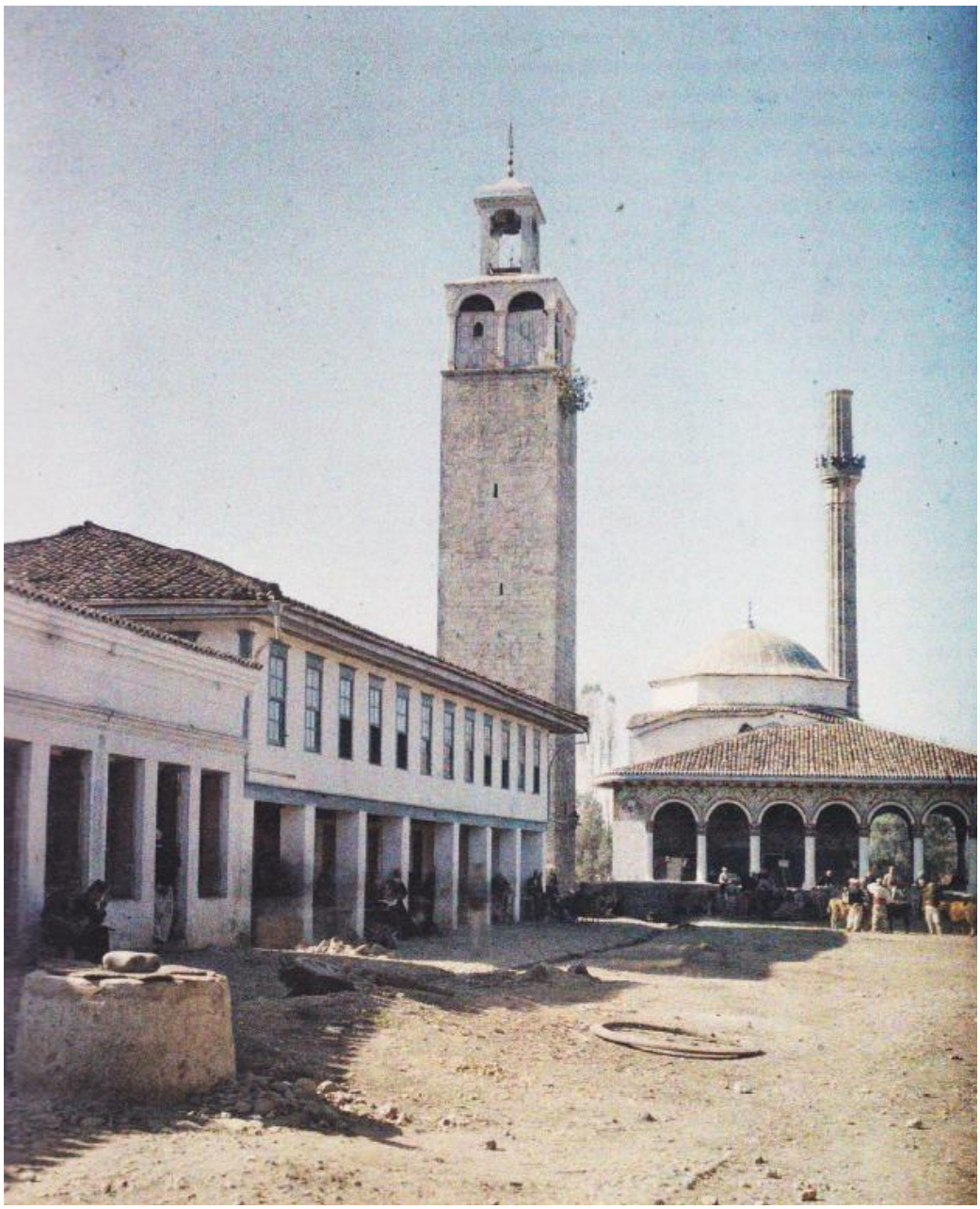


Figure 61: The Ethem Beu Mosque. Minaret with missing roof (1913) [ii]

The dwelling zone was shaped by strong property interests. Because

[ii] In May 1913 a French banker and philanthropist Albert Khan financed a trip of his photographers to the Balkans in order to capture human cultures of the whole world in black-and-white and color photographs as well as in moving picture films for his planned "Achieve of the Planet"

of the lack of centralized control and urban development plan these zones scattered in a very wide areas without any limits or defined areas. The households of the landlords of feudal aristocracy of the town were taken place behind the city walls almost at the center. The inhabitants of the town were scattered in all parts of the new town. Each one of them was divided by large empty spaces, which had an influence in unjustified extension of the town. Most of the dwelling houses were one- or two-storied buildings of mud-bricks.

The commercial and economic zone consisted of bazaar that was in the center of the town. The bazaar was a big shopping structure made up of numerous shops, galleries and eaves. Evliya Çelebi in 1662 wrote in his famous book "The diaries of travels" (Seyahatname):

From Elbasan, we passed the highlands of Kerraba with great difficulty and after nine hours arrived in "kasaba[iii]" of Tirana. It is a province under the jurisdiction of Sancak[iv] of Oher[v]. It is a "kaza[vi]" of 150 "akçe[vii]". The residential part of the city is situated on a large plain. It has mosques, inns, hamams, a covered bazaar and a market place[viii]. The vineyards and the orchards are countless. All the roofs are covered with tiles (Kera, 2004:2).

[iii] Kasaba means a settlement bigger than village smaller than a city
[iv] Sancak means district. Ottomans had a good hierarchy of administrative
[v] Today is in Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia. The lake with the same name creates the border between two countries.
[vi] Town
[vii] Ottoman currency
[viii] Evliya Çelebi describes in plural shops, inns, hamams that shows the importance of the city.

The bazaar has been demolished and rebuilt in 1905 on the same land, however in the 1960s during the attempts for reorganizing and modernizing the center of the city by the communist government of the post-Second World War, was demolished to open space for building the Palace of Culture.

Figure 62: The Bazaar after the reconstruction of 1905

Figure 63: Aerial View of Bazaar and South-west of Tirana

These two zones were connected through a number of streets and lanes. The streets mostly were narrow, curved, discontinued and cul-de-sac due to the family separations and additions and property interests would ramify into additional ones to form hundreds of threads which were two to twelve meters wide and all of them were unpaved.

The public squares of the town were the squares in front of the Sulejman Pasha Mosque and the mosque of Ethem Beu, the prayer's square (Namazgjah) in Tabaks neighborhood, and the square of the military parades that is the Shallvare area of present day and the Square of Albanians in front of the Republic Cinema. Rather than typical squares as organized

geometrical spaces surrounded by buildings, they were small spots created by the expansions of streets with irregular shapes and free of buildings.

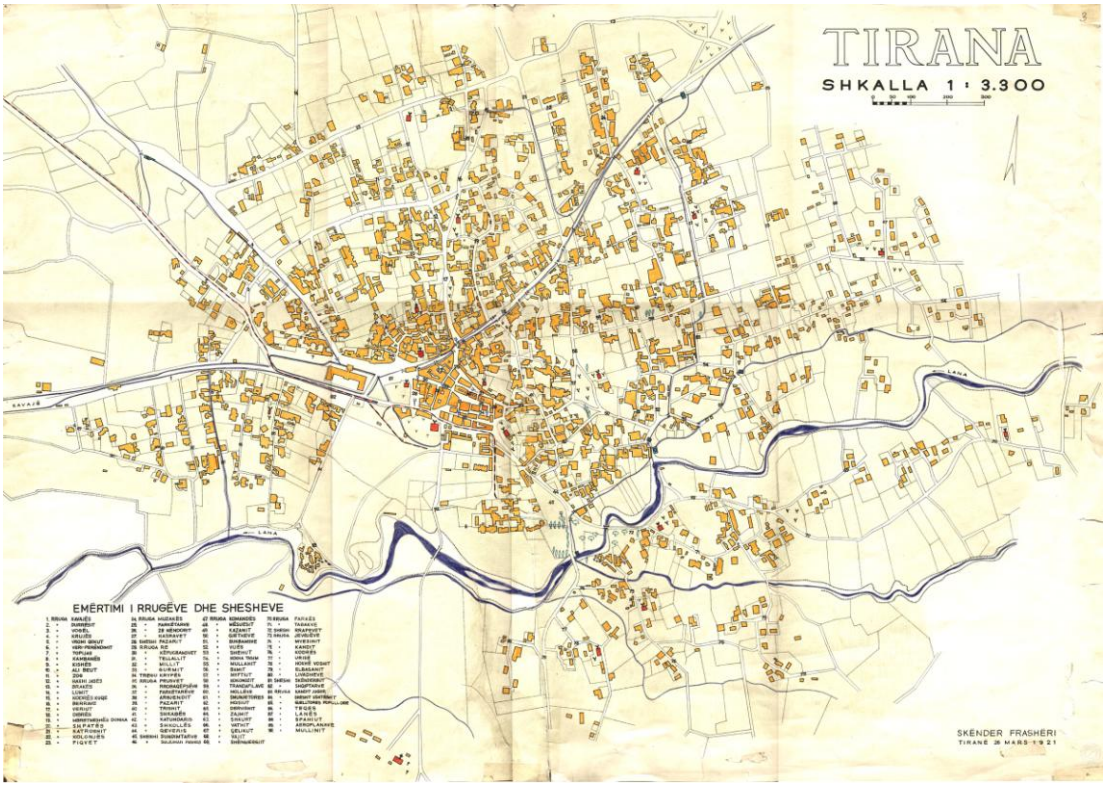


Figure 64: Map of Tirana with names of streets and squares dated 26 March 1921

The Ottomans conquered Albania in 14th century. After five century, on November 1912 Albanians declared political independence which also effects the urban development of Tirana that was highly depended to the Ottoman oriental influence.

This independence was a political illusion for Albanians. Not for so long, late 1914, Greece occupied southern Albania, including Korçë and Gjirokastër. Italy occupied Vlorë, and Serbia and Montenegro occupied parts

of northern Albania until a Central Powers offensive scattered the Serbian army, which was evacuated by the French to Thessaloniki. Austro-Hungarian and Bulgarian forces then occupied about two-thirds of the country.

Figure 65: Division of Albania 1914-1916

When the First World War ended on November 11, 1918, Italy's army had occupied most of Albania; Serbia held much of the country's northern mountains; Greece occupied a sliver of land within Albania's 1913 borders; and French forces occupied Korçë and Shkodër as well as other regions with sizable Albanian populations such as Kosovo. In 1916-1917 Austrians, that

had occupied most of the country, made urban studies for most of the towns as well as Tirana. In 1917, the first city outline was compiled by Austro-Hungarian architects.

Figure 66: Urban Plan of Tirana Drafted by Austrians on the Year 1916, Scale 1:5000

Figure 67: Road Structures Drafted by Austrians on 1917, Scale 1:5000

Sami Frasheri, one of the most well-known Albanian nationalist writer and philosopher published in 1899 his book “Albanian-her Past, Present and Future”, predicting the future capital of Albania.

The center of Albania, i.e. the general capital should be one of the cities that are located in the middle of Albania and where the Albanian language will be spoken. And it would be even better than a new city be made in the middle of Albania in a healthy and beautiful place. Such a city, which we may call Skenderbegas, will be arranged in the most beautiful shape, with wide and straight-line streets, with nice houses, squares and everything necessary; and it will be enlarged and increase in a short time because all the Albanian elite and savants of the country will need to get together and built

their houses there. So this city will be free from the wicked vices preserved by old cities; and since its habitants would be from all parts of Albania, the language of the city will be a cultivated and a general one for all over Albania.

This city including nearby regions should be ruled and governed like an autonomous region (Frasheri, 1988:71-72).

3.2. From Independence to the World War II (1920-1938)

On January 20, 1920, the Congress of Lushnja declared Tirana as provisional capital city of Albania. As it was described 21 years ago by Frasheri, Tirana met all the geographical and social aspects. It was in the middle of Albania, close to sea and mountains, had very smooth climate and fertile lands and had a rapid development trade economy. According to the features of Frasheri for an ideal capital city, Tirana needed an urban development plan which would consist of a strong political and administrative center.

When we look at the figures of this year (1920), we may see a town which occupied a space of 305ha. The residential zone covered 98.2 % of the whole space. The population was 15,000 inhabitants and the density was approximately 50 residents per hectare. In the following year, 1921, Tirana grew by 15% to 350 ha. In 1930 the population was about 31,000; while in 1938, over 38,000 inhabitants (Aliaj, 2003:166). The capital city Tirana began to expand rapidly as the attractive new political and social center of Albania.

In 1923, Austrian architects and engineers produced the first regulatory town plan of Tirana. This plan was a regulation of existing street network creating a rectangular network in south and west of the bazaar and in north and east of the bazaar the street network improved by straightening and widening them. The center of the town still remained the bazaar.

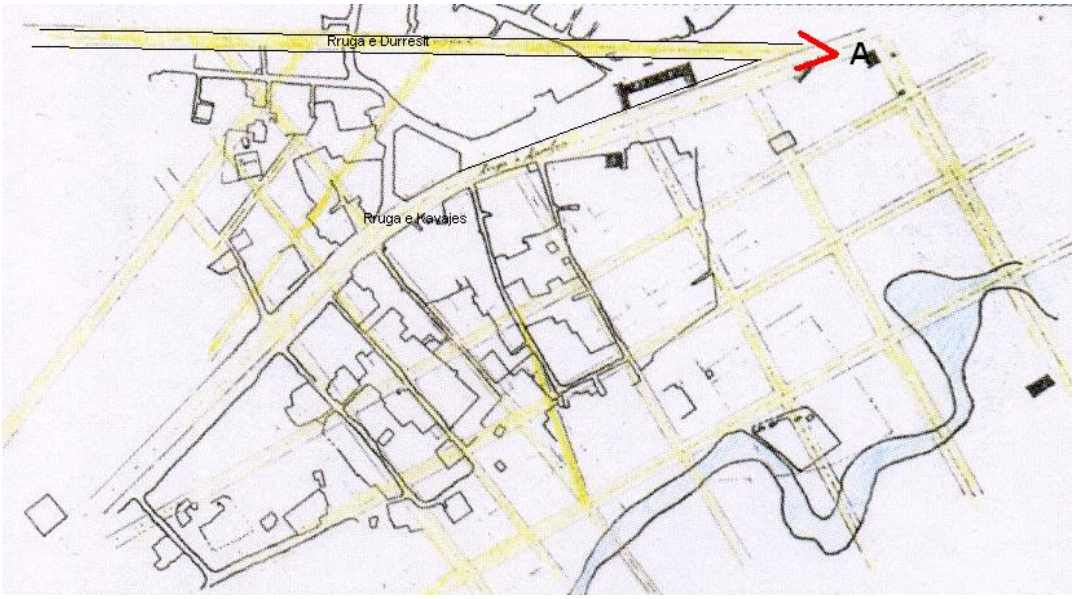


Figure 68: Part of Urban Plan 1923 Zone Between Street of Durres and Lana River

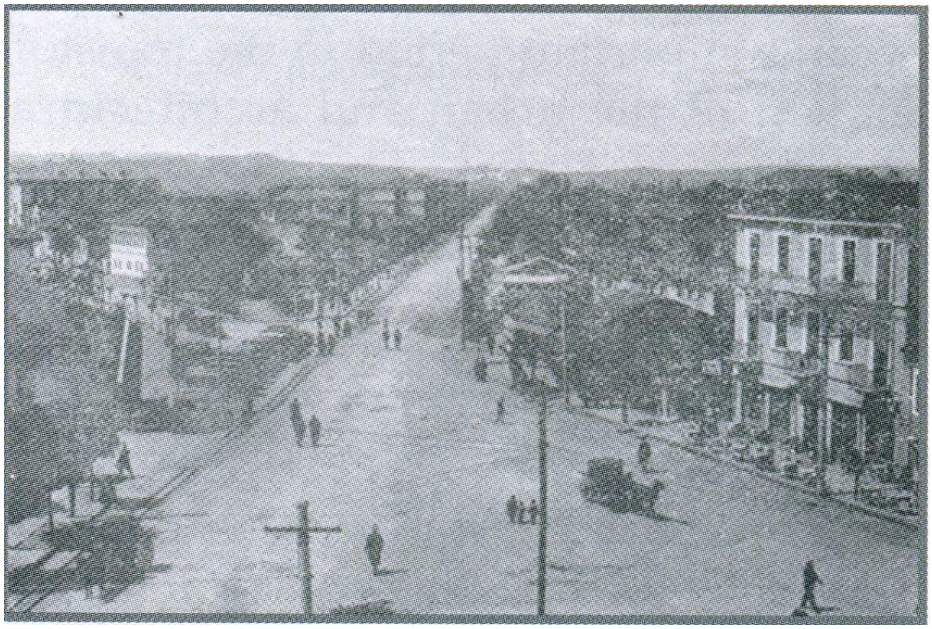


Figure 69: Street “Mother Queen” (Street of Durres) reconstructed on 1922-23 (shown on fig.68 by letter “A”

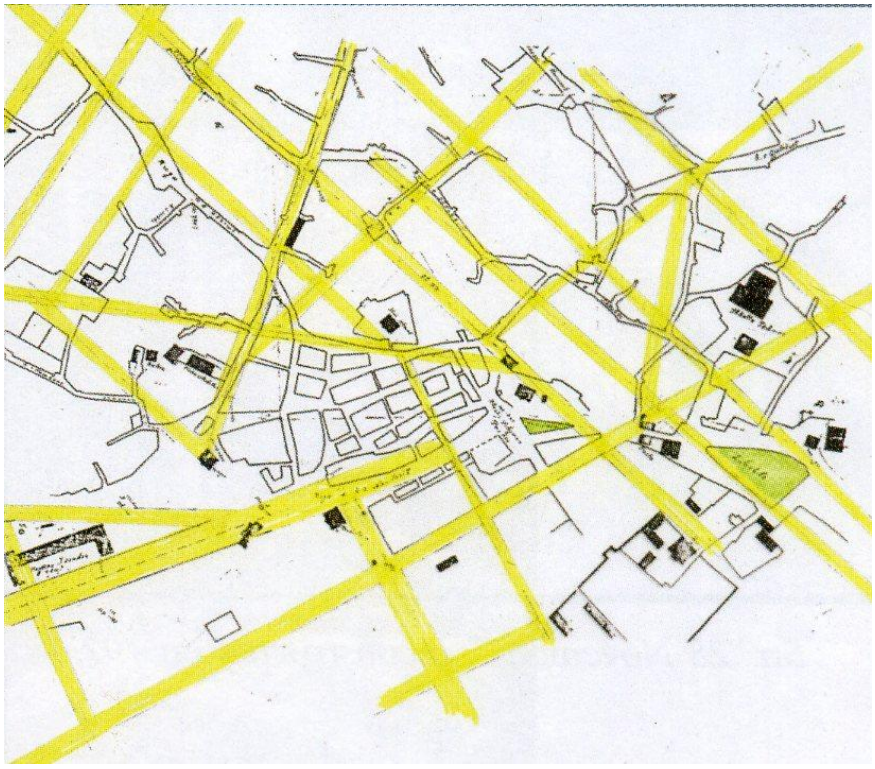


Figure 70: Part of Urban Plan of 1923. Zone between center and Bazaar

Figure 71: Street "28 November" 1923

From the declaration as capital city in 1920 till 1925, for five years period Tirana was politically unstable. The government had changed several times because of the political struggle between opposite parties and between ex-feudal land owners with the liberal democrats. At the end of this political

fight in January 1925 Constitutional Assembly approved new status of Albania as Albanian Republic and Ahmet Zog was proclaimed first chairman of the Presidential Republic. Tirana also changed its status from temporary capital to permanent one. Although the regime was democracy, Ahmet Zog used his power against opposition parties and civil liberties disappeared; opponents of the regime were murdered; and the press suffered strict censorship. Nevertheless Ahmet Zog in October 1928 announced Albania as Constitutional Monarchy and himself King (Raymond, 2008).

Following a chaotic political period and with the coming to power of the government led by Ahmet Zog, the authorities of the time oriented the country's policy toward Italy, which, at that time, was the most powerful and developed neighbor country. In the circumstances of a total lack of financial resources, the government asked economic aid of Italy for geodesic surveying of Albanian towns as well as the development of their regulatory plans (Aliaj 2003:429).

Mussolini's Italy saw this rapprochement as an ideal opportunity to finalize its aspirations for a possible expansion towards the Balkans. With the economic aid given by Italy through the National Bank of Albania, Italy founded the "Society for the Economic Development of Albania"[ix]. The Albanian government took 70.5 million franga gold for civil works (Mehilli,

[ix] SVEA Societa per la Sviluppo Economoco dell'Albania

2012:40).

The period of King Zog was the second important period in the transformation of the urban and architectural structure of Tirana. In 1925 the well-known Italian architects like Brasini and Floristano Di Fausto were invited to Albania by the government.

Especially Fausto developed the first master plan about the rearrangement of the new center of the Albanian capital, which consisted in a group of six building for the ministries and a central eclectic boulevard, a plan that would later be carried out with some modifications and, even later, would be translated into more pragmatic forms.

The idea of Brasini however was to create a Roman isle in the city without combining it with the rest that marked by a prominent Oriental character, an isle that would serve as a connecting joint between the old town and the modern one that was to be built in the future. The project consisted in developing a wide boulevard in north-south direction, which divides the existing city from its periphery and which was proposed as a monumental and governmental center of a new autonomous city[x] that was to be developed while ignoring the Oriental heritage of the old town.

According to Glauco Gresler, an architect from Bologna opponent to

[x] From the administrative point of view, when it became the capital of the country, Tirana was still a sub-prefecture of the Durres prefecture. It became an independent prefecture in 1922.

fascism, the regulatory plan of Tirana which was laid out by Brasini in 1925, was implemented later, and was a review of criteria of Urbe Massima (1917)[xi]. The project covers from an idea of a huge boulevard which is oriented north-south, which divided the existing city from its periphery clearly. This axis was proposed as an administrative-monumental center of an autonomous city which will be developed disregarding the existing structure and will be separated totally from the context of the same abstraction as *Monumental Axis of 1917* for Flaminia in the project of Urbe Massima (Shkreli, 2000:156).

The Albanian designs of Brasini were more successful with regard to urban planning than with regard to architecture, because none of his plans were realized. On the other hand, his "Sistemazione delle Capitale d'Albania Tirana" had a great impact on the urban development of Tirana. Brasini's success in Tirana was as great as the one he had achieved in Rome in 1917 when he realized the *Asse Flaminia* (Salzmann, 2010:26).

The partial plan of Brasini foresaw two administrative centers, Ministries' Square (Scanderbeg) and Presidency Square (Mother Tereza), connected by a splendid boulevard. Today a hundred years later, the boulevard is still the largest and the most beautiful in Albania.

The purpose of this axis as an urban mechanism was not the regula-

[xi]Orano, Paolo; Brasini, Armando; L'urbe Massima: L'architectura e la decorazione di Armando Brassini Italy 1917

tion of the transportation network, but was creating a bridge between old city center and new modern city. This *trick* of urban planning is used by planners in the different cities in different times.

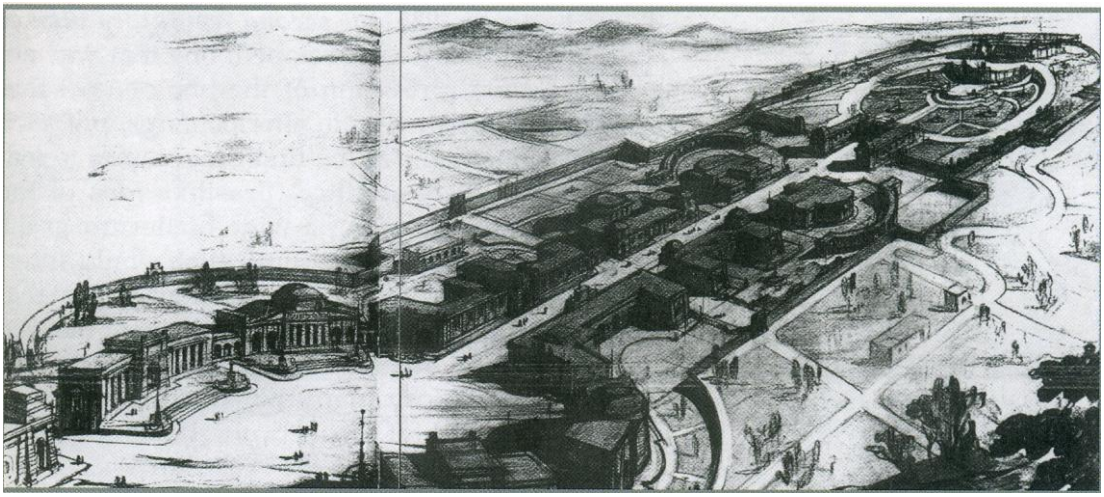


Figure 72: The first draft of North-south "Spine" launched by Italian architect Brasini

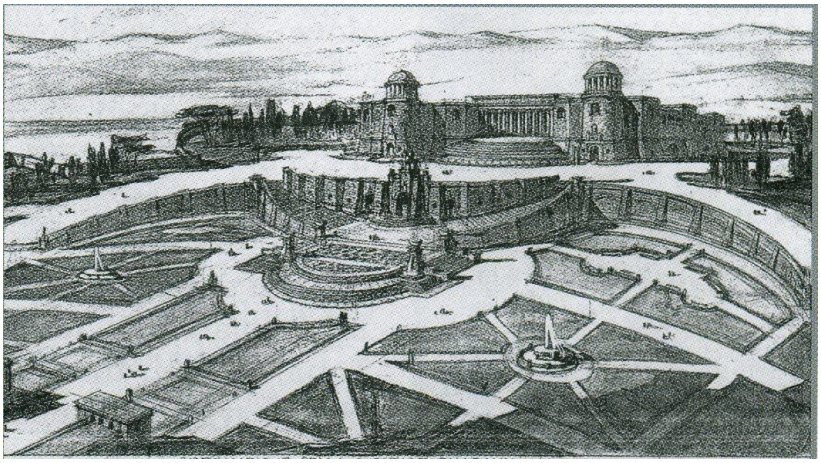
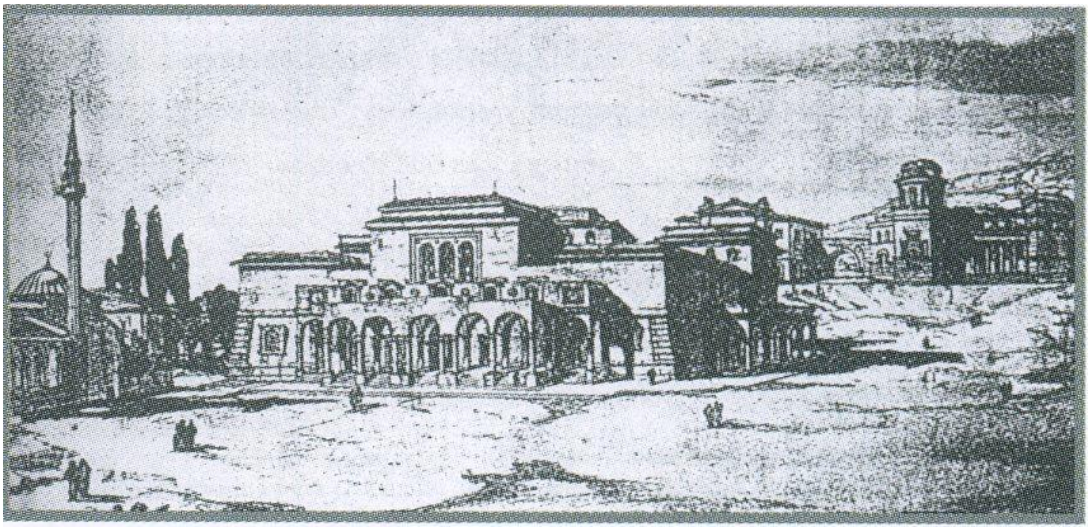


Figure 73: Draft Design of King's Palace in the South end of Boulevard (Nowadays location of University Headquarters)



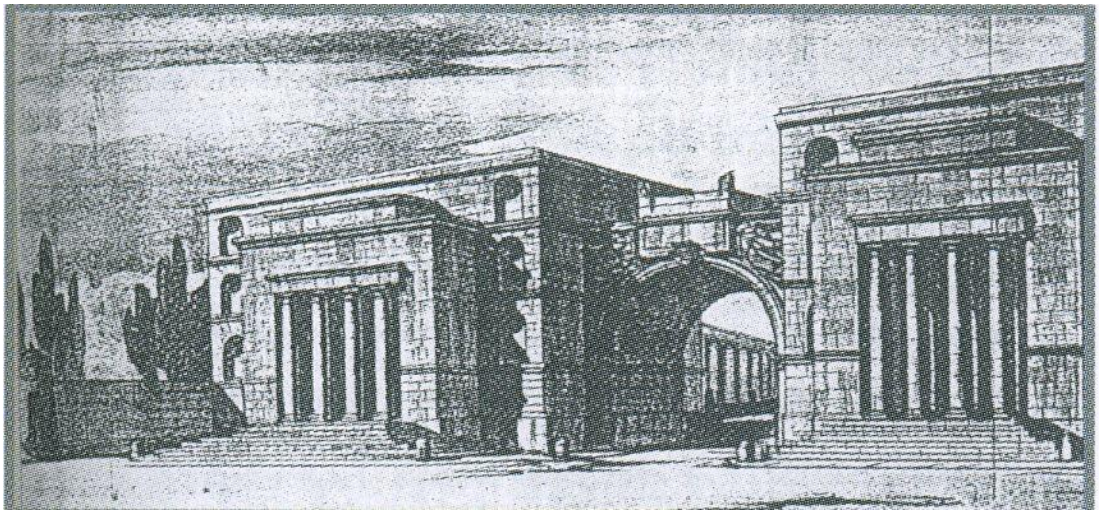


Figure 74: Draft Plans of various buildings designed by Italian architect Brasini. Above: The office of Prefecture Below: The square of Ministries

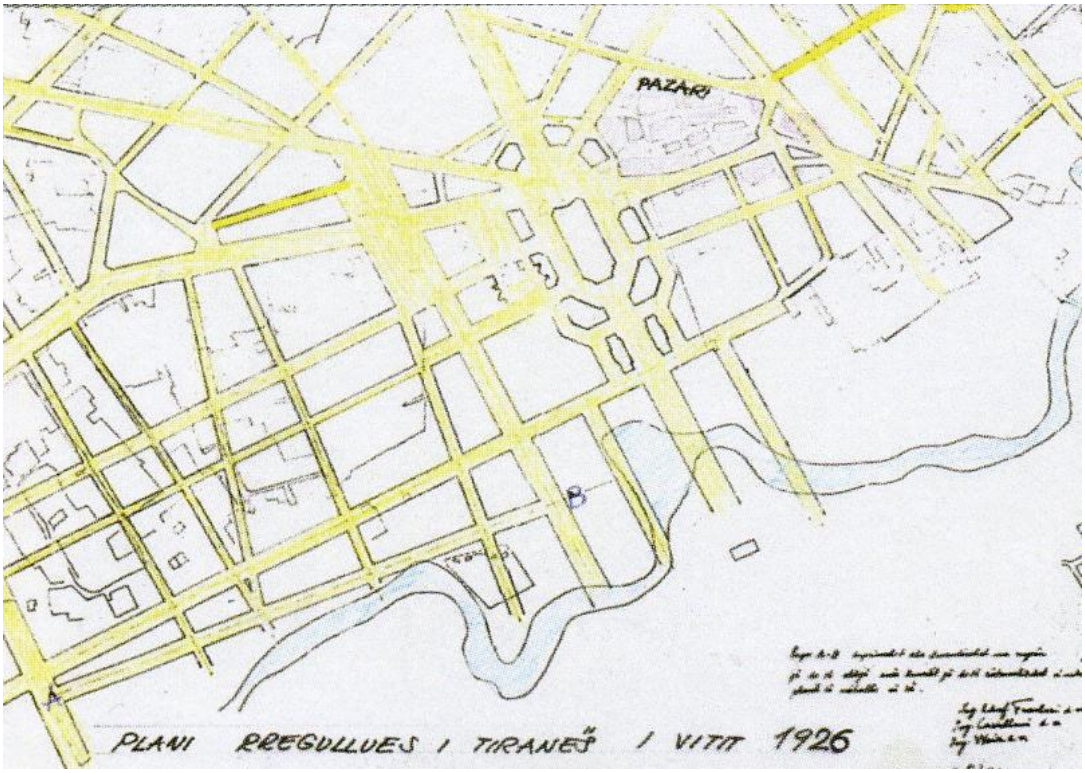


Figure 75: The part of Urban Plan 1926

In 1926 the second regulatory plan of Tirana was developed by three engineers: the Albanian engineer Eshref Frasheri, the Italian engineer Castellani and the Austrian Weiss. This plan was not only a revision of the one that was developed by the Austrian architects but also a materialization of the idea of the construction of a wide boulevard in the north-south direction of Italian architect Brasini for the first time. This boulevard would intersect perpendicularly the Lana River that runs right through the middle of the city. The new plan also systemized for the first time, Lana River. The administrative center was to be erected south-west of the bazaar, and the first blotch of the “Scanderbeg” Square was jotted down, a square whose new shape resulted from processing architect Brasini’s drawings, who had masterminded it

in a circular shape, and which in this regulatory plan, would take a longitudinal shape that more or less it retains to the present days.

The third regulatory plan was developed in 1928 which was the first one after the regime was changed to kingdom. The new plan was made by Austrian architect Kohler. This plan was drawn to a scale of 1:5000 and was significant with the grid iron system of the road network especially in the New Tirana area, which was almost uninhabited.[xii] Thus the Austrians were the first to plan the expansion of the city beyond the already built area. The major part of Tirana's courtyards and gardens was destroyed to make space for restructured streets, which, however, for reasons of urban economy, always followed the original lines. The Austrian concept for the transformation of old Tirana was the same as the one used in Europe in the 19th century for restructuring medieval quarters. This method was once used by Baron Haussmann in Paris and later by the Austrians themselves in Vienna.

The New Tirana area had been designed as an area of an extensive development, which is an area of mansions, which would be generally built in rectangular courts and would form quadratic quarters matching the road network, or would be placed by several concentric circles. In the regulatory plan of the New Tirana the area of private plots was observed. These plots ranged from 1,000 to 1,500 m² and allowed abundant spaces for gardens, and Italian

[xii] This area later used by the "polit bureau" government of Enver Hoxha, which is so called dictator of communist regime, as the residential villas and the residence of the dictator itself.

architects that revised this regulatory plan would later called this area “Garden City” (Aliaj, 2003:32-33).

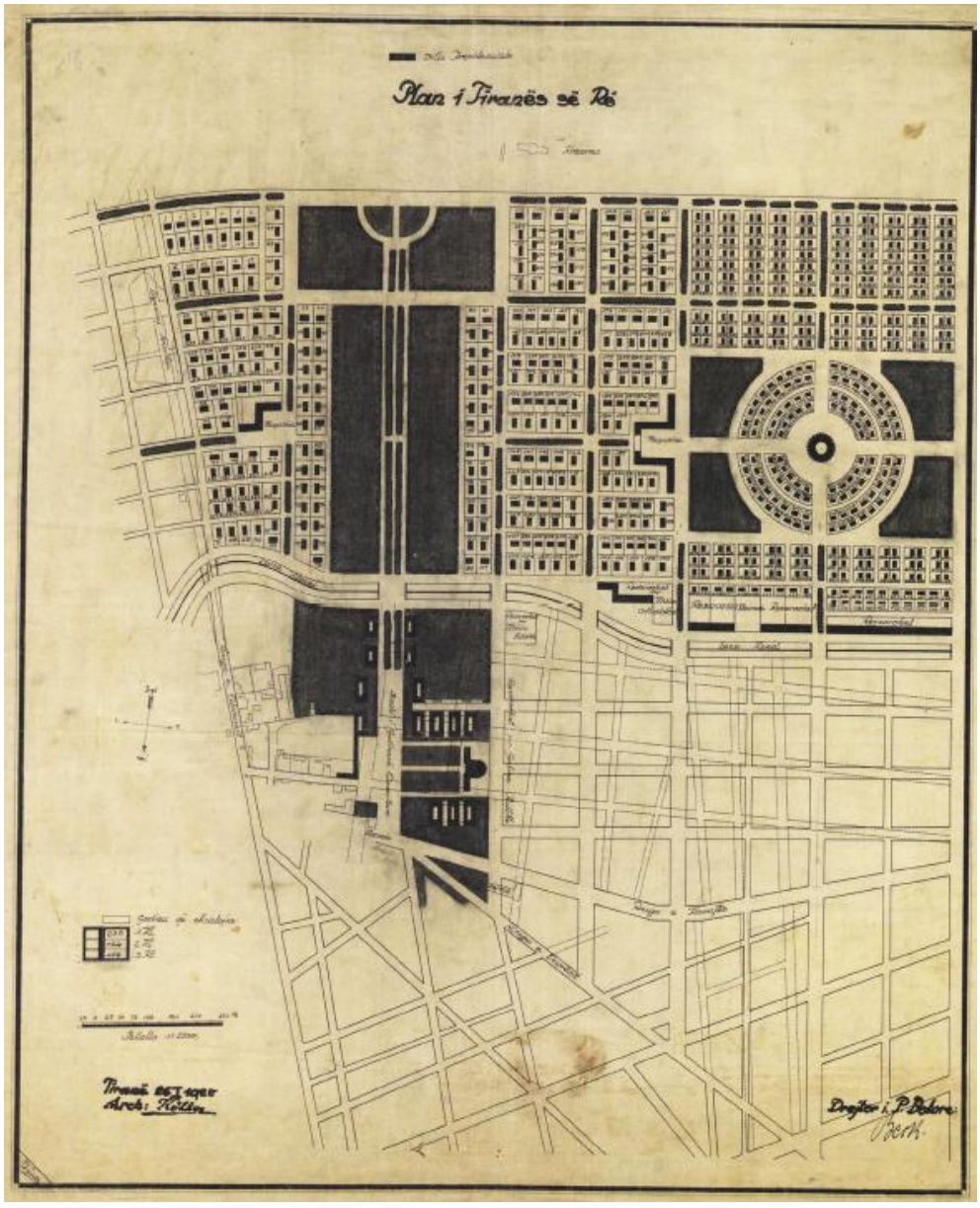


Figure 76: 1928 Urban Plan, New Tirana Area Grid-iron Plan

In that regulatory plan the other important aspect was that the boulevard of north-south directed which was outlined precisely with the administra-

tive center by its sides, beginning from the bazaar and ending in the southern foothills at the Royal Palace.

On February 1929, according to an article in a newspaper called "Bashkimi" Tirana Municipality would apply urban regulatory plan especially on main boulevards: (Mehilli, 2012:49)

From Et'hem Beu Mosque until hills of Pasha works begin for Boulevard Zog I. Mr. Mehmet Fortuzi with his friends has taken place in opening ceremony of construction of Kavaja Street. This year the boulevard will constructed only 500 meters long i.e. till Romanian Embassy, because of the low budget of municipality. Width of the street will be 30 meters. Both sides will have sidewalks, which are 4 meters width. In fact, 3 meters will be cement tiles and 1 meter will be trees and flowers. Boulevard will have two roads which are 8 meters wide each, and between them, will be a sidewalk 6 meters wide. Both two sides of this sidewalk will plant trees and flowers 2 meters wide each. Royal Road will be widening. The plan for expansion of Diber Street ends today. The houses on the Hoxha Tahsin Street that the regulatory plan has finished will be evaluated in these days and the expropriation of the lands will be made. The systemization of Skenderbeg Square began.

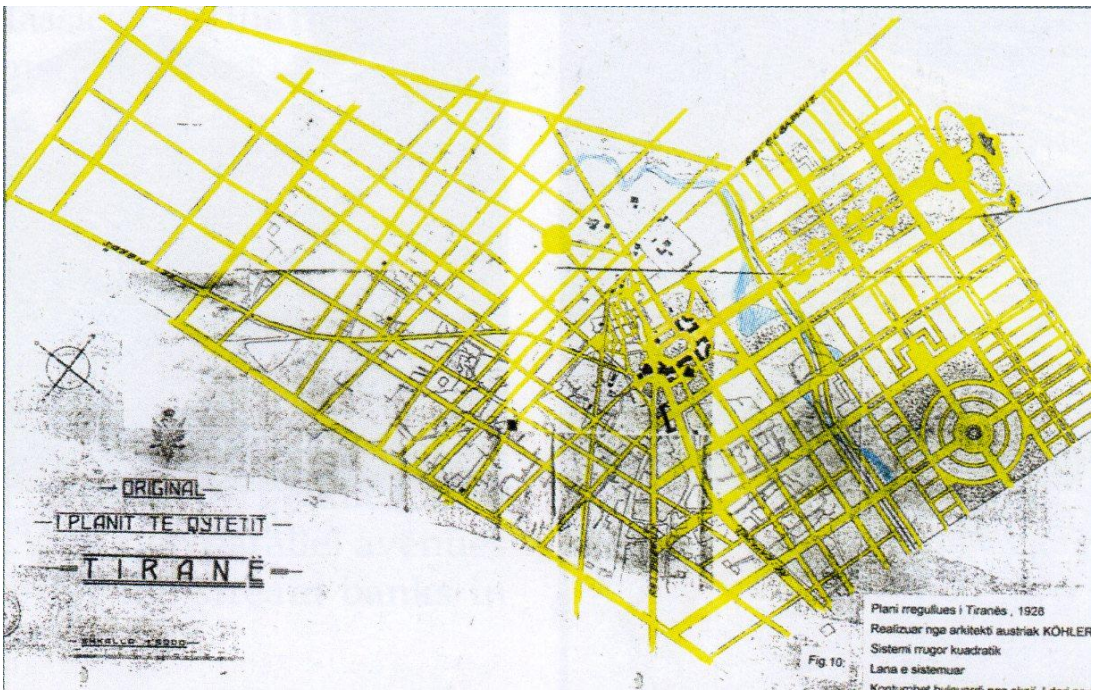


Figure 77: 1928 Urban Plan of Tirana

The fourth regulatory plan without losing time was designed the following year 1929. The whole boulevard was designed not only from bazaar but from the future stadium of the city that would be built in the place of the present-day railway station to the Royal Palace. According to the plan the Royal Government took a decision of law No: 2241 at 21.09.1929 for this regulatory plan and this date was also marked as the beginning of the works for construction of “Zogu I” Boulevard that represented only the northern half of the boulevard.

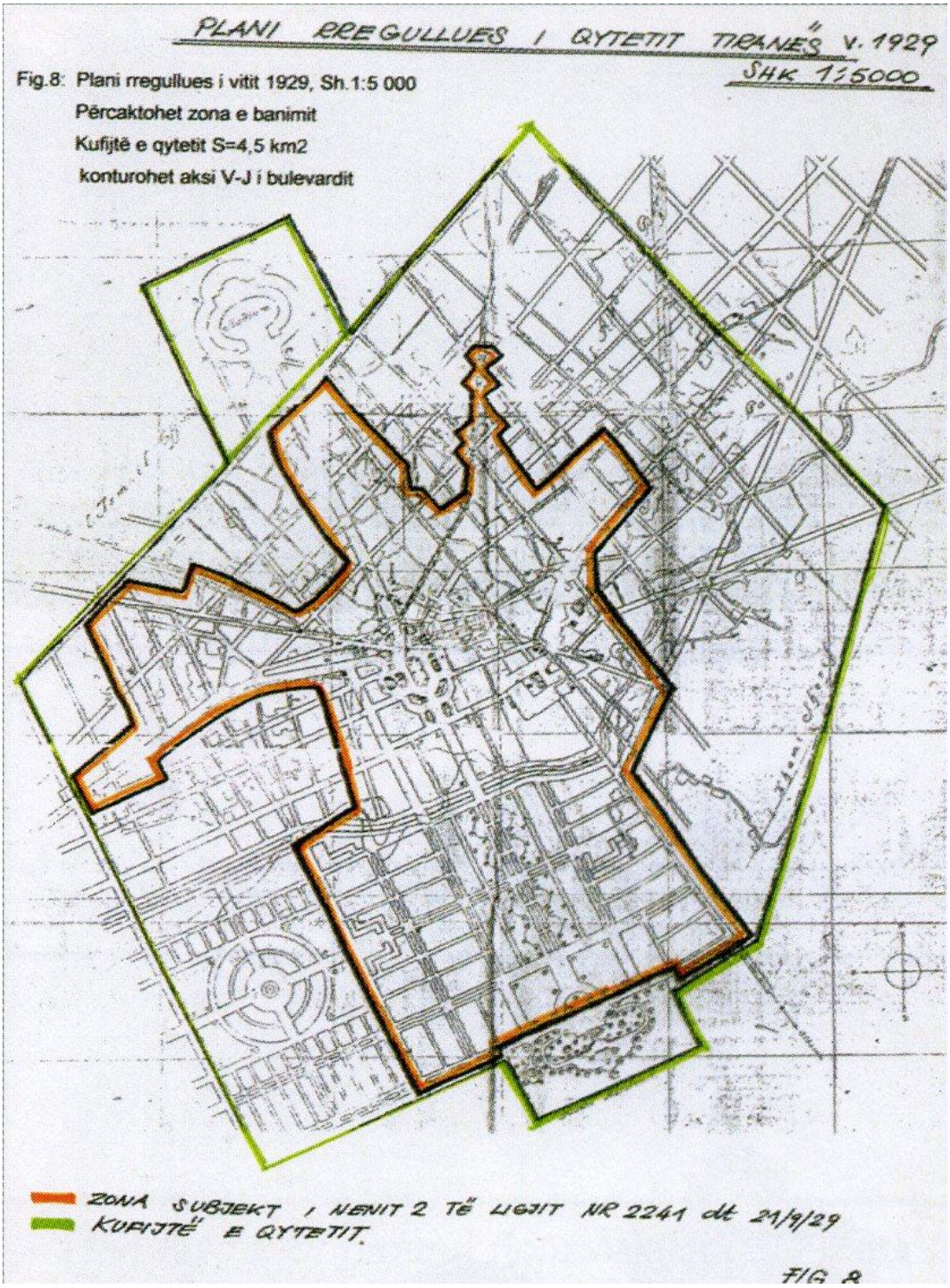


Figure 78: 1929 Urban Plan of Tirana

Figure 79: The Blue prints of 1929 Urban Plan of Tirana

Early in 1930, works for the building of the two main parts of the boulevard get started; the two parts would be one single central boulevard with the name “Zogu I” ending in the “Scanderbeg” square and giving the city breathing space; besides, works began for constructing the buildings of the ministries around the square and The National Bank of Albania. This large building which is a work of Italian architect Vittorio Morpurgo, was inaugurated in 1938. The building was erected at the beginning of Mussolini Road which is Kavaja Road today. It was constructed of reinforced concrete and was coated with ceramic bricks and stone slates brought from Italy. The National Bank of Albania building and the other buildings of ministries were the symbols of power and solidity (Aliaj, 2003:40).

Municipality of Tirana took 500.000 franga gold debts from office of retirement fund for payment of expropriation of the houses and lands. Demolition began on January 5th, 1930. Only north side of the boulevard, 800 meters long and 35 meters wide cost; expropriation 559.777 franga gold and construction 810.000 franga gold, in total 1.369.726 franga gold. The Lana River Bridge which ended in 1934, cost 272.981 franga gold (Mehilli, 2012:50).

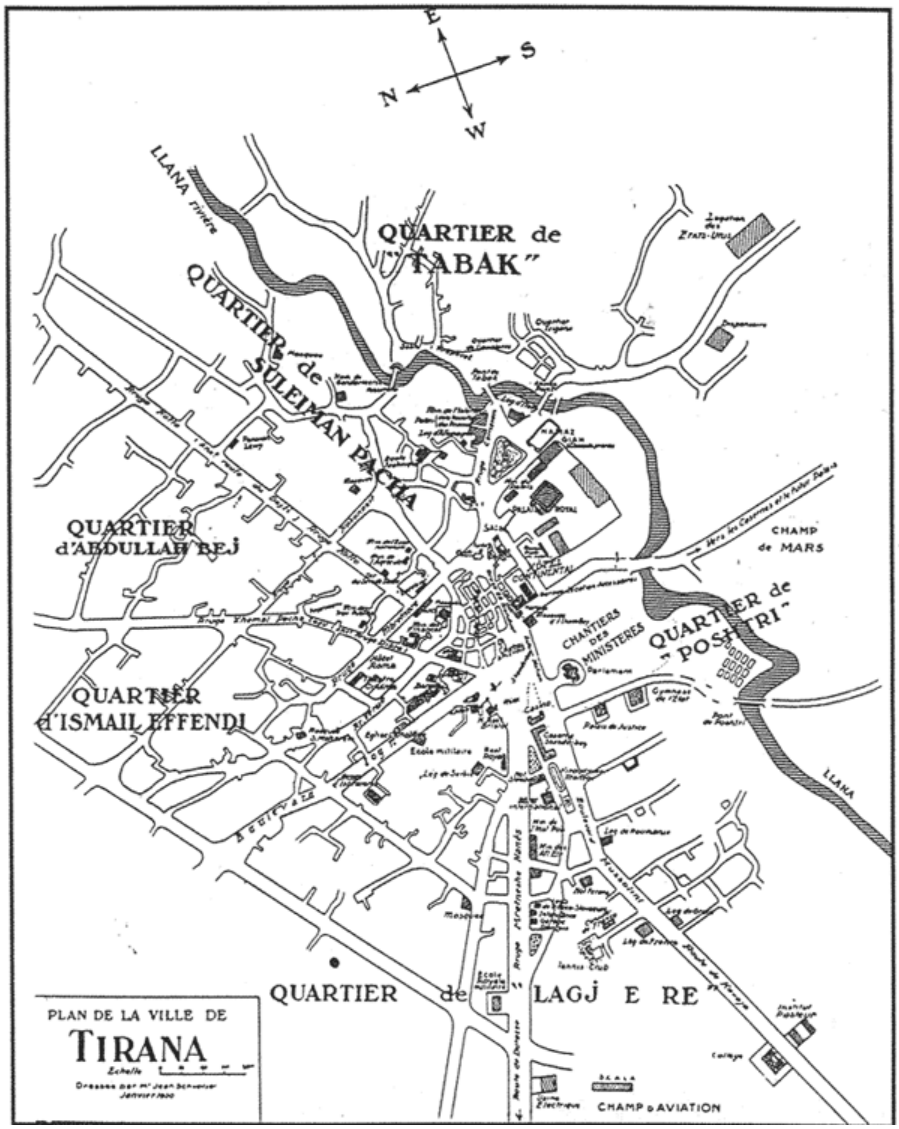


Figure 80: The first Touristic Map of Tirana Drafted by Jean Schveitzer and Published by Leon Rey in the Guide of Albania on 1930 (Aliaj, 2003:210)

At that time, Tirana was experiencing a period of glory and urban prosperity that would get expression especially with the inauguration of the new boulevard of the city. A French architect of the time, who was visiting Tirana at that moment, would utter his surprised remark: "*I saw a boulevard without a city!*" (Aliaj, 2003:36).

The boulevard that stretched in north-south direction measured a length of 2 km and a minimal width of 35 m. It was a two way straight-line highway of four lanes in each way for vehicular traffic, paved with slates, with broad side-walks paved with small pumice-stones of mosaic shape and lined with four rows of trees and privets.

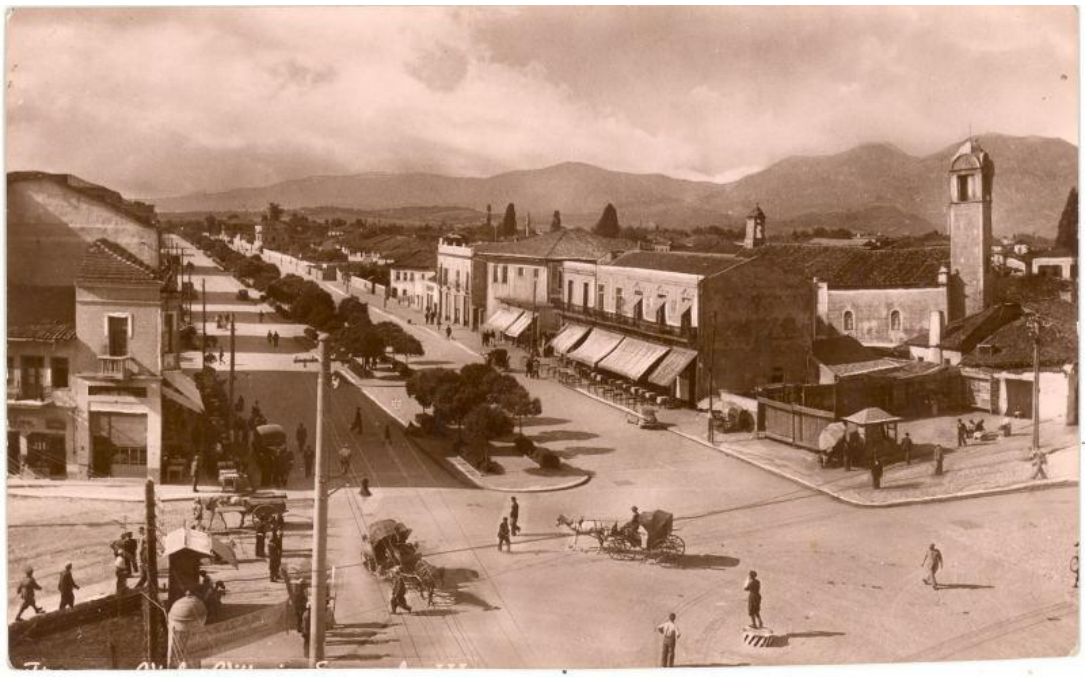


Figure 81: The Boulevard of Zog I

Figure 82: Pictures taken from the center. Durres Street, Kavaja Street and the Municipality Building

Figure 83: Aerial view of Skenderbeg Square, Ethem Beu Mosque, clock tower and old Bazaar

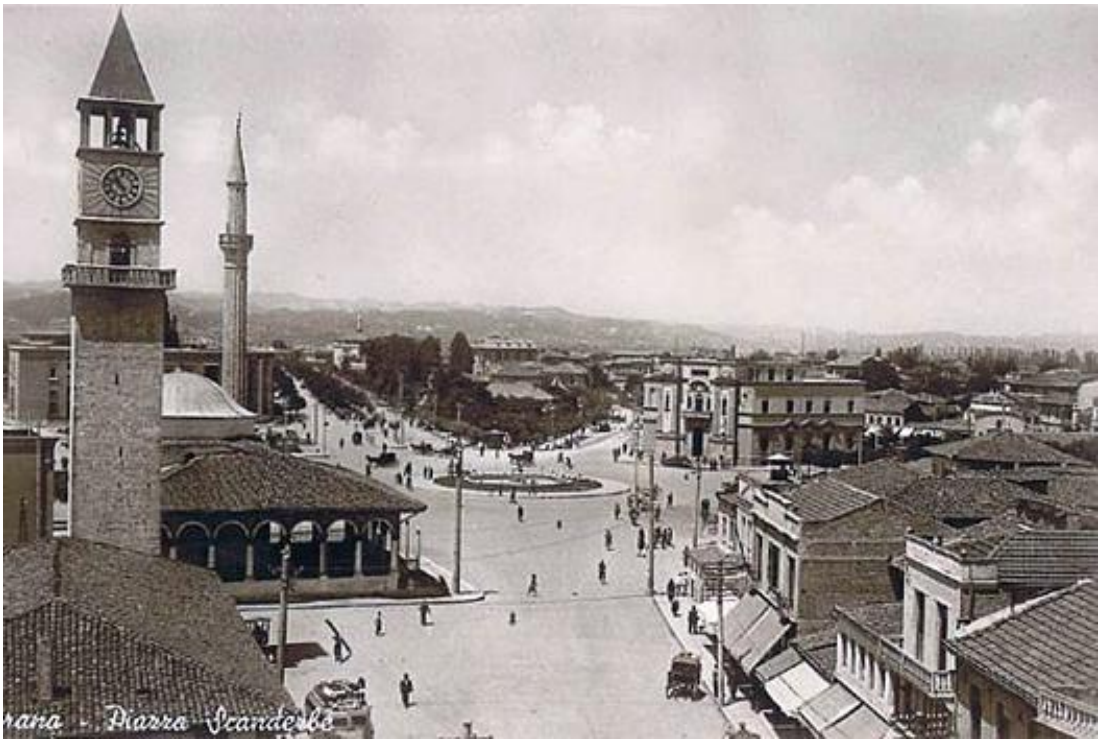


Figure 84: The center of Tirana (Piazza Skanderbeg)

3.3. The Center of Tirana

As far as the center of Tirana is concerned, several kinds of blueprints were developed which, regardless of the alterations and transformations they underwent later until its realization, all of them had the position of the boulevard as a point of reference, had the same compositional design and all were located it in the middle of the city, west of the bazaar, where all the city's radial streets converged, and which in that time was an empty space (Aliaj, 2003:38).

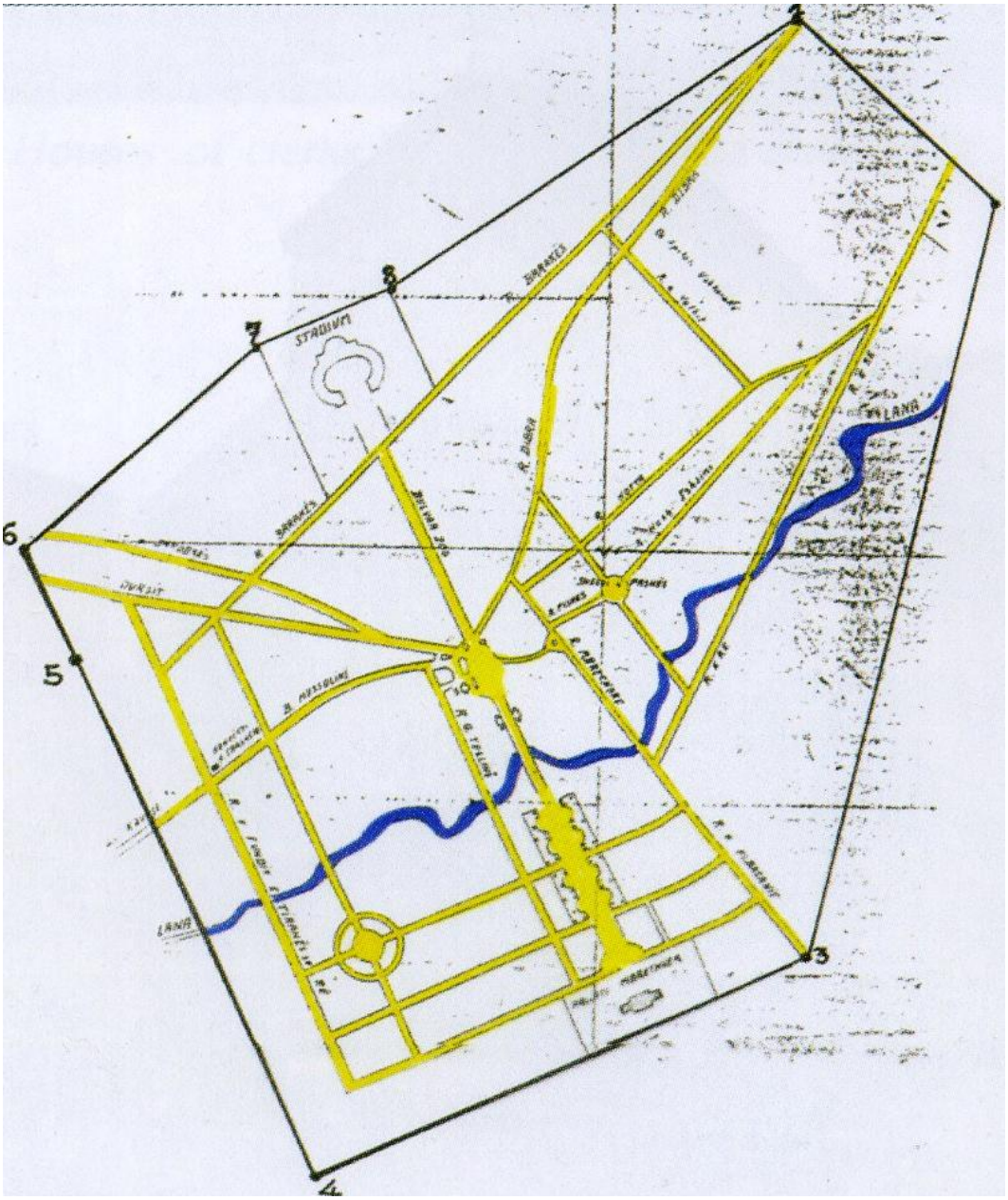


Figure 85: The borders of Tirana 1931

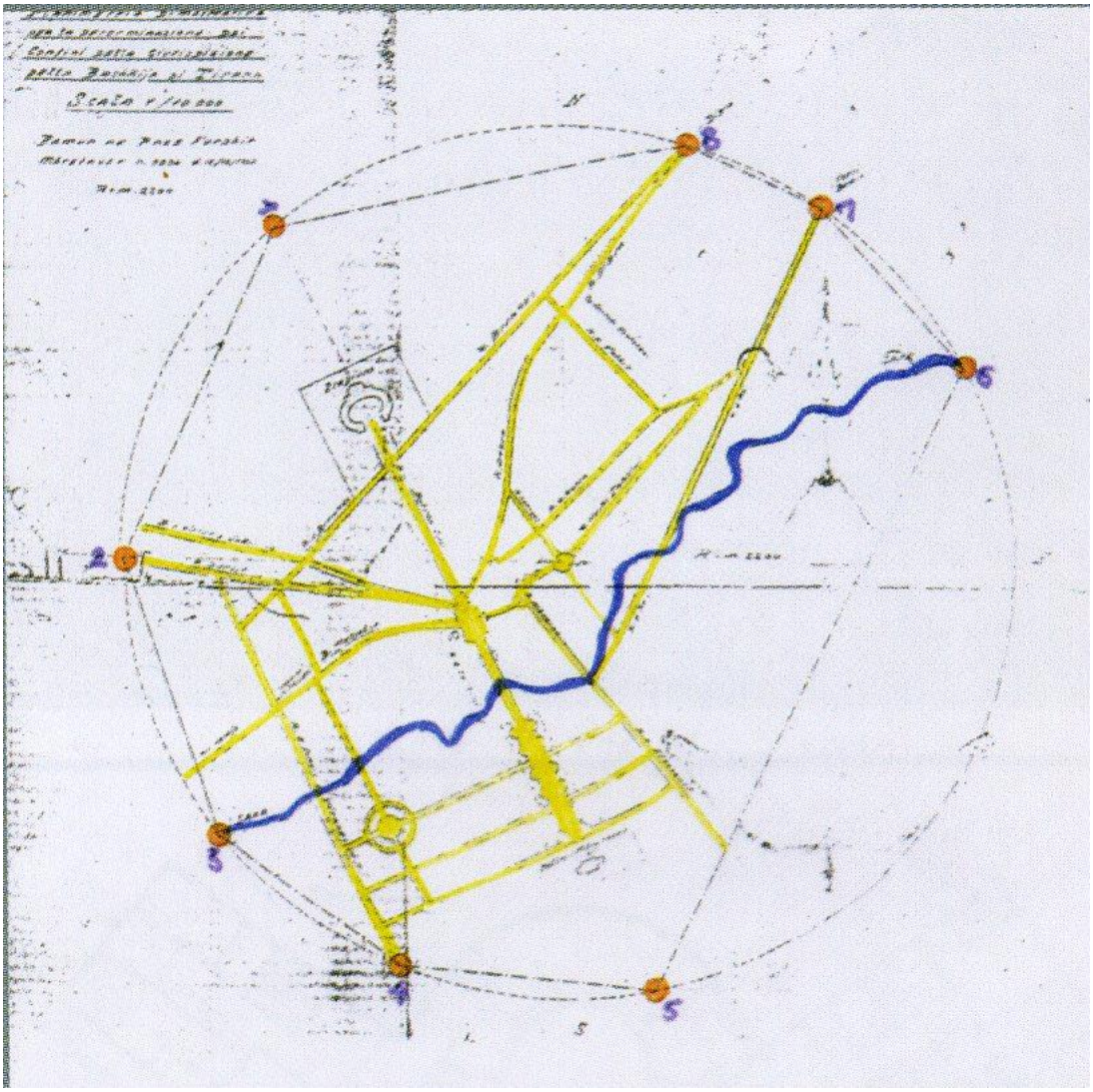


Figure 86: The borders of Tirana 1930 drafted by Brasini

The first variant was the one that provided the creation of three squares, where the main and the greatest of them would be in front of the administration buildings and would occupy a space of two hectares in the shape of a circle. The plan was to erect in this square several large-scale buildings. The second square placed south of the first was much smaller, had a rectangular shape and was included within a geometrical structure of the

buildings in a position of 45° to the boulevard's direction. And the third one which occupied the entire space of the former "Scanderbeg" Square, had an undefined form and was surrounded by the existing buildings.

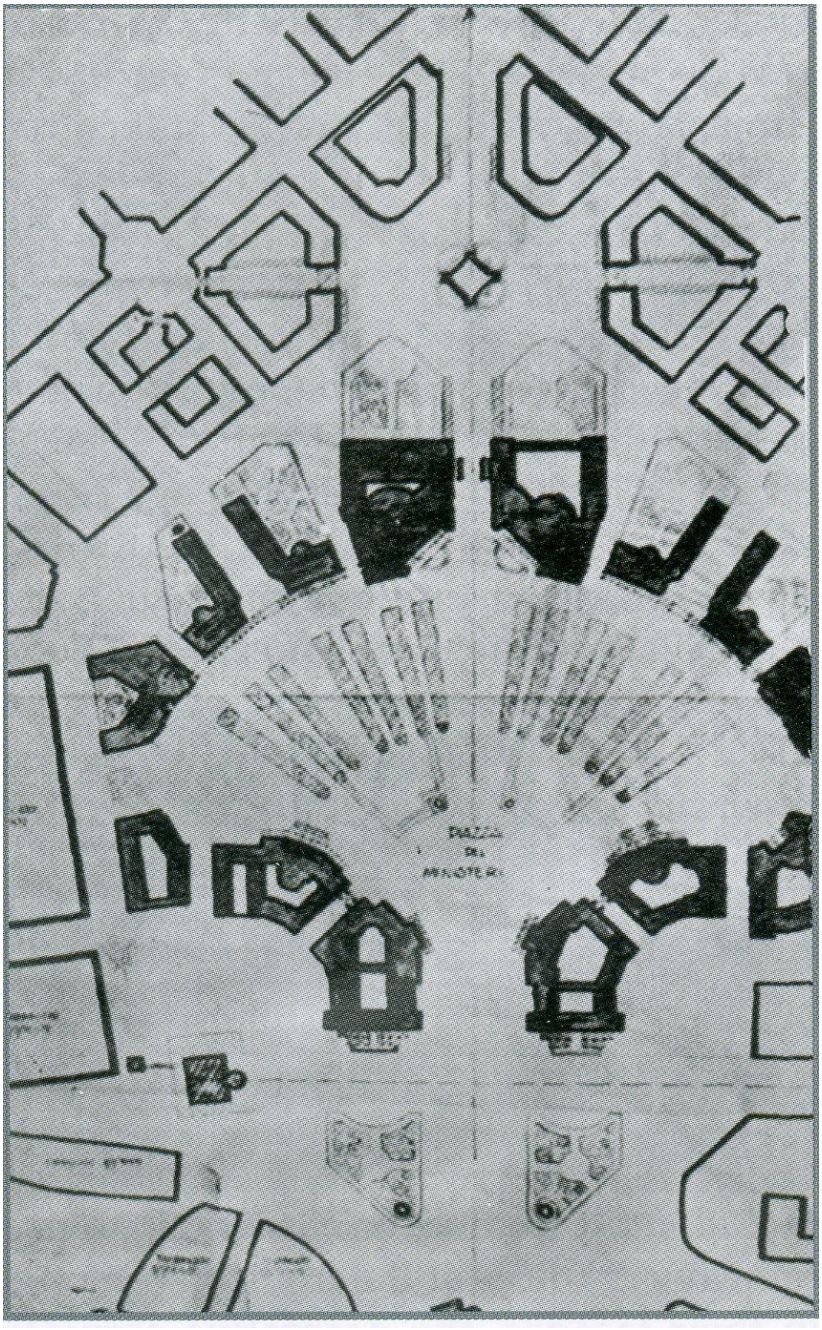


Figure 87: The First option for Center of Tirana City Draft Designed by Brasini

The second and the most prominent variant was that of architect Brasini, who designed the center of the town in the shape of a circle, similar to the Square of St. Peter in Rome, where the buildings of ministries would be placed by the perimeter of this circle. Other buildings of administrative and social functions, with facades parallel to the street, would be constructed along the boulevard, while at the end of the boulevard, south of the city; the presidential palace was to be built. Both the first and the second variants were not approved because of an inappropriate composition scheme in the first variant and because of the failure to include into them the historical objects such as the Mosque and the Clock Tower.

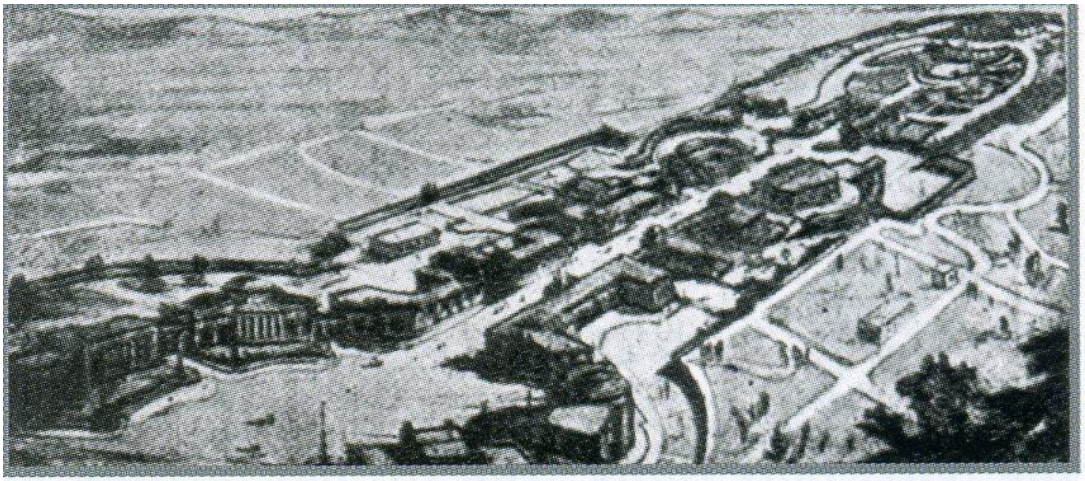


Figure 88: The second Variant of Tirana city center by Brasini

The third variant that relied on the compositional solution of the second variant included only the project of a single square with a space of two

hectares and a longitudinal shape in the direction of the boulevard, where the narrow edges would end in semicircular shapes. The square is surrounded on all sides by eight objects placed symmetrically.

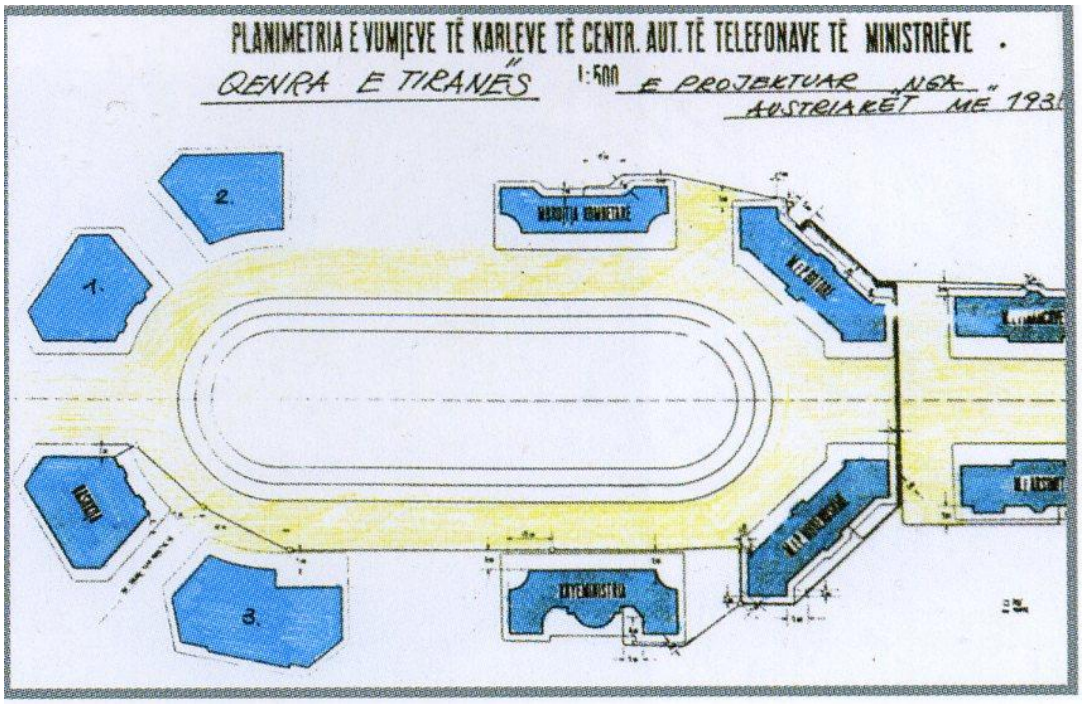


Figure 89: The third option for Tirana City Center

This variant was approved not only because it offered a simpler compositional and harmonious solution, but also because it included the Mosque of Ethem Beu and the Clock Tower.

The forth variant in the same year 1931, the Florentine architect Florestano De Fausto made the last attempt for the systemization of the city's center, an attempt that ended in success this time and was carried out almost

entirely thanks to the ambitions of the King Zogu to make Tirana a modern European city. According to this plan, the City Hall of Tirana, the National Bank, the flower garden in the central complex, the central square with its fountain as well as the place that today is known as “Parku Rinia”[xiii] were built.

Architect De Fausto elaborated on and complemented the third variant with a flower garden in the middle of the four buildings of the ministries and a fountain in a circular shape between two other buildings north of the square. Because of the very great linear dimensions of the square and since the buildings around it were not very high, one or two floors were added to them, while the flower garden in their middle was dug deeper by 1.5 m so as to increase their height by an artificial effect.

The newly-built objects featured a high architectural quality and a powerful drive to look imposing, which demonstrated the power of the government of the King Zogu.

[xiii] Youth Park

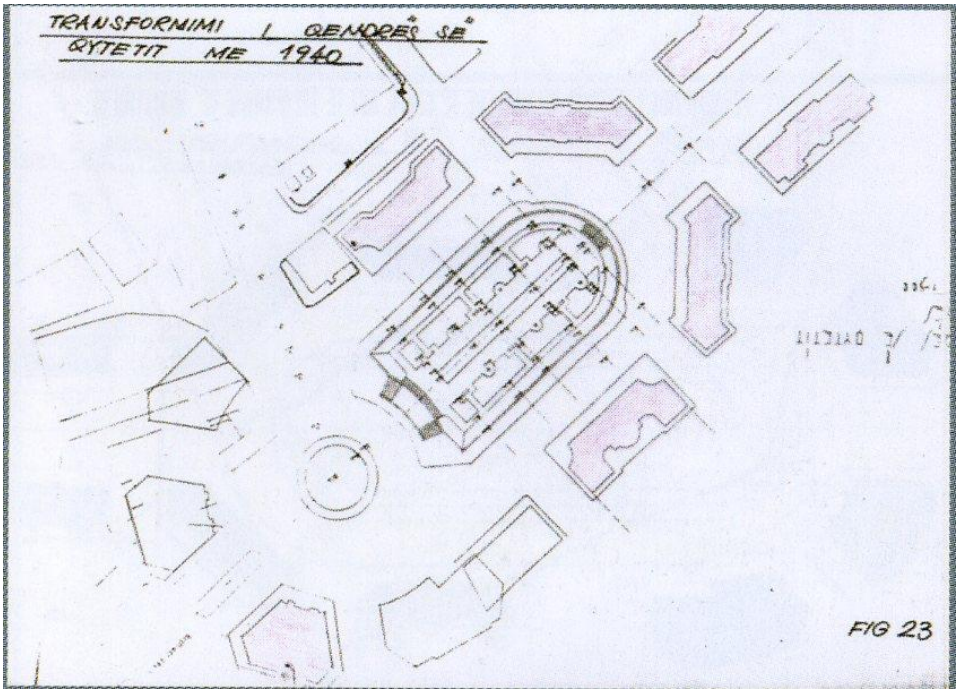


Figure 90: The fourth option for Tirana City Center

3.4. The Italian Occupation and the World War II

On April 7, 1939, Italy occupied Albania officially and declared it a part of Italian Kingdom. A product of this political change was a new regulatory plan of Tirana, which began to be implemented during 1939-1942. This plan provided the creation of a developed urban center that would be populated by Italian colonists. It was prepared by a mixed working group of Italian and Albanian specialists led by the Florentine architect Gherardio Bossio and the engineer Ferdinando Poggi (Aliaj, 2003:42).

In their regulatory plan, the architects foresaw Tirana as a city that would grow and develop rapidly, especially after the arrival of many Italian

administrators and citizens who would reside in Albania permanently. The regulatory plan provided the development of the city for a period of 60 years, when the population would grow to 130,000 inhabitants, and the area of the city to 1,100 ha, with an average density of 130 inhabitants per ha.

This prediction, however, were not failed. In 1937, Tirana counted 35,000 inhabitants, and when the work for the implementation of the regulatory plan began in 1939, the population had increased to 40,000, and by the end of the regulatory plan, it had reached 75,000, with the city expanded from 500 ha to 800 ha

Figure 91: Street Scene (1940) Transition from the modern part of the city to the old part. The new part has wide boulevards with asphalt pavements. Road system is gridiron. The new, modern buildings were usually more than two storey, reinforced concrete, with flat roofs. On the other hand, the old side is full of narrow, stone pavement roads with one or two storey, tile roofed buildings.

The master plan studies an area of 2,800 ha by including the military sections, the airport, the connection and industrial sections that in total would make 1,700 ha. The important part of this regulatory plan is that it defines the limits of the city as a municipality bordering the communes around it. These limits encompass a space of 7,300 ha. The landscaped areas, chiefly north and south of the city, would be of 132 ha, the sport section east of the city of 33 ha, the park behind the Fascio House (the University) in the hilly area of 22 ha, and the residential area of 660 ha. The city would grow northward, beyond the Lana River, so a satellite zone would be created and linked with the city by streets/bridges. This neighborhood of mansions would be greatly landscaped and be called CITTA GIARDINO (garden city). The industrial section would grow NW and SW of the city, and in between these two sections a neighborhood of workers would be built. The railway station would be located SW of the city and would link Tirana with Durres and the eastern region of Albania, and a track spur would link the industrial section; the hospital section and the cemetery would NE of the city; the fairs' section would be built NW of the city, and the airport would be west of it and would be circumscribed by the outer ring road of the city, i.e. by the road of Durres and road of Kavaja.

The system of streets is both radial and circular, and in the southern and southwestern parts it is quadratic with parallel and perpendicular road-

ways. The systemized Lana River has an E-W direction and crosses the boulevard that is in the N-S direction perpendicularly. The city is traversed by many ring roads such as the Greater Ring Road that intersects both the northern and southern parts of the boulevard, the Middle Ring Road, the Smaller Ring Road, and some partial ring roads. A principal roadway is the avenue that runs parallel with the western part of the Greater Ring Road and that terminates in the railway station.

In this regulatory plan Tirana is projected as an overly landscaped city-park, with low buildings and a very busy section at its center, whose accomplishment has been extremely difficult because of the strong feelings of private property expressed by the inhabitants. The regulatory plan has done its utmost to make as few expropriations as possible, to preserve the existing buildings and to maximally evaluate them, with the best purpose that the city would not lose the traces of the Turkish influence. The intensive area includes the boulevard with the government buildings, the avenues road of Durres and road of Kavaja, the Old Bazaar Street, and the area around them with buildings up to 5-storied high, which would house offices, shops, banks and other facilities for serving the citizens. This regulatory plan contains schemes of the street traffic, the development of the downtown, the urban conditions for the whole city, the zoning map, the connection of the city with the Dajti Mountain by means of a lift, the plan of the graveyard, etc.

The urban conditions are given in great detail both as summarized in the map of the entire city and as presented in 9 component maps of the general plan which, being drawn to a small scale, indicate every detail without leaving room for misinterpretations. By the same principles, the plan details the cross sections of all of the main streets and squares, including the sizes of the streets and sidewalks, the location of the landscaped areas, the lightning, the distances of the buildings from the streets, their heights, etc.

This urbanistic operation brought to Albania, particularly to Tirana, the influence of Italian architecture and town planning, especially of the times of Fascism, whose predominant feature is their rational character.

In the new regulatory plan of the downtown, the configuration of the central “Scanderbeg” Square underwent changes. The plan provided the tearing down of the building located in the northern part of the square (the former building of Executive Committee) as well as the construction of the new building of the City Hall, which was to be of a quadrangular shape in its ground plan and with an inner courtyard, thereby definitely correcting the flaw in the preceding plan that brought confusion in the city movement on account of the influx that came to the square from all of the radial roadways. The construction of the new City Hall would bring a smooth flow of traffic from the avenue road of Durres to the one of road of Dibra, the latter being located in the eastern side of the object, and a smooth flow of traffic from the avenue road

of Kavaja to the one of the road of 28 Nentori, the latter located to south of the object, without any crash between them. Likewise, service and social and cultural facilities would be constructed around the city's center, such as the theater, the post office, etc.

The elongation of the "Vittorio Emanuele" boulevard- the former "Zogu I" boulevard- south of the "Scanderbeg" Square, in the direction set by Brasini, was doubtless the most significant measure for the urban development of the city. It had been pre-arranged by a greatly detailed regulatory plan covering both the city's center and the "Impero" boulevard. But in order to justify the grandeur of this boulevard, it was proper for it to be complemented in both sides with buildings designed for offices, banks and social and commercial activities. From the volumetric aspect the buildings should be identical; also, they would be built within very appropriate distances from each other so as to achieve a proper destiny, and from the architectonic aspect they should be fairly descent to justify the width, the grandeur and the importance of this avenue, absolutely the most important of the city that traverses it right through the middle.

The boulevard "Viale del Impero" would serve as a connecting joint between the existing center of the city that was developing around the "Scanderbeg" Square and the new political and sports center that was to be developed in the southernmost end of this boulevard. The author of this complex is

again architect Gherardo Bosio; it features a typical rational fascist architecture and includes the Offices of the top officers (today Council of Ministers), the Military Headquarters (today Maternity Hospital) and the Hotel (Hotel Dajti), all of which are located along the sides of the boulevard, while at the head of the boulevard is the House of Fascio (today University), the "Dopolavoro"[xiv] -a recreation center which houses a theater hall, a rich library and reception halls (today Academy of Fine Arts)- and the "Gioventu Littorio Albanese" that today is the colonnaded premises housing the University Library.

Thus, the neo-fascist architecture of the 1930s and the beginning of the 1940s was materialized through broad ceremonial avenues and squares for organizing grandiose parades, with porticos and walls coated with natural stones, with high colonnades and wide monumental stairs and with relieves and captions in Latin. In order to distinguish this new architectonic style from the Renaissance models, its authors adopted style, schematizations or simplifications of ancient ornaments such as the omission of capitals and frontals and the replacement of the tiled roofs with flat roofs.

[xiv] Dopolavoro means after work in Italian

Figure 92: View from today's University "Casa del Fascio" 1940. Spine had begun to construct. The formation of the spine helped the formation of the new Tirana while developing.

In this period, it was the most renowned architects in Italy and beyond who worked on and showed great interest in Tirana, including the father of modern architecture, the French architect Le Corbusier, who drew some preliminary rough ideas on the town planning of Tirana, but being charged with the task of developing the urban plan of the city of Algiers at that time, he declined from being involved in working for the Albanian capital (Aliaj, 2003:50-51).

The fall of Mussolini on September 1943 and the entry of Nazi armies in Albania marked the end of the urban and architecture developments in Tirana. The increase of the resistance against Nazi forces brought series of fighting's caused a lot of damages to the cultural and historical monuments of Tirana. The date of Liberation of Tirana, 17 November 1944, apart from the glorious victory of Albanian National Liberation Army, marks also the end of a period of urban development framed with the balance of private property and public interest based on the market principles.

Figure 93: Aerial View of the Spine, 1940. The boulevards and the square were constructed in the heart of the old structure as it was planned and drawn on the blue prints. The north side of the spine was designed as a boulevard with trees in the middle. Scanderbeg Square was finished with buildings of ministries and the green park at the center. The park was dig in order to give effect of hugeness to the ministries which are not more than 3 storey. From the west, coming Durres Street and connects to the square. At the intersection stands City Hall which was demolished later and in the Centralized Economy Period the National History Museum had been constructed.

3.5. Centralized Economy Period (1945-1990)

The end of the World War II brought a communist government in Albania. This is the end of the Italian of the Fascist period's influence on Tirana's town planning. The dictatorial communist system was too centralized and inclined toward launching urban operations that ignored private ownership, with architects and town planners enjoying the "freedom" to revolutionarize and transform everything with one stroke of the pencil always within the limits and the political instructions of the routine Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party of Labor of Albania.

The new regulatory plan of Tirana was drawn up in 1957. The tendency of communist authorities was to deny everything that was connected with the past, especially with monarchy and Fascism. The history of Tirana would originate only after 1945.

The operations that began in Tirana following the town planning studies of 1963 and 1974 and that focused the authorities' attention on the city's center were typical. This was a delicate moment for Tirana's identity (Aliaj, 2003:58).

The center of Tirana was conceived as a monumental space that would represent the "*force and rebirth*" of Albania. To achieve this goal, the

Old Bazaar of Tirana, the City Hall, the Orthodox Cathedral, an old ensemble of shops, hotels, bars, and a group of traditional houses were torn down on account of being considered as "*degraded and worthless"* objects. This is how the scant evidence of their Tirana-esque origins were substituted by important objects such as the Palace of Culture, Hotel Tirana, the National History Museum, the "Scanderbeg" Square and a new residential buildings, etc. (Fig: 93) The only historical buildings that were taken under protection were the Mosque of Ethem Beu and the Clock Tower, the complex of ministries and few typical Tirana houses.

Figure 94: The Palace of Culture with colonnades, Hotel Tirana (15 storey), the National History Museum of Tirana with its famous mosaic on the front façade.

In 1985, the National Planning & Architecture Institute launched the drawing up of a new regulatory plan that was adopted by government on 1989. The main focus of this regulatory plan was considered to be the elongation of the boulevard “Martyrs of Nation” northward, which at a turn in the western side intersects the road to Kruja and there is where it break takes place, as one branch is connected with the highway, the other one terminates in Rinas Airport. This would be the main entrance to the city. In 31 March 1991 Albania made the first pluralistic election and began the so-called period of transition and the transformation of the regime of communist dictatorship with a state-owned economy into a democratic pluralistic system with a liberal market economy. Thus the new regulatory plan of 1985 remained on blue prints.

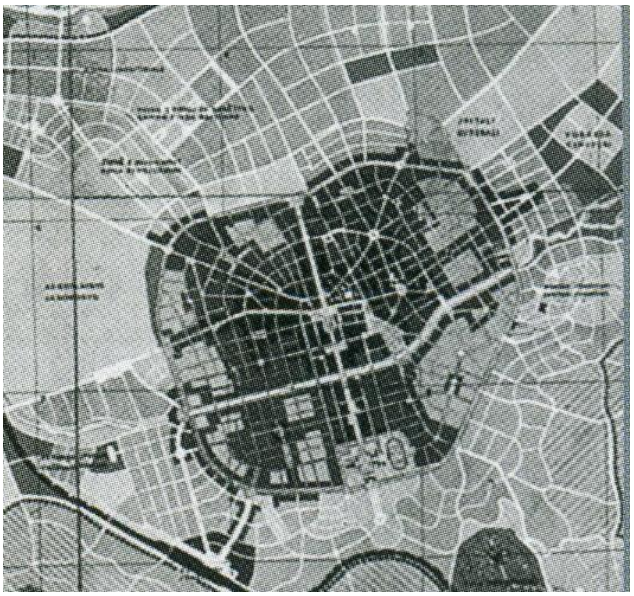


Figure 95: Urban Master Plan of 1942. It was never applied.

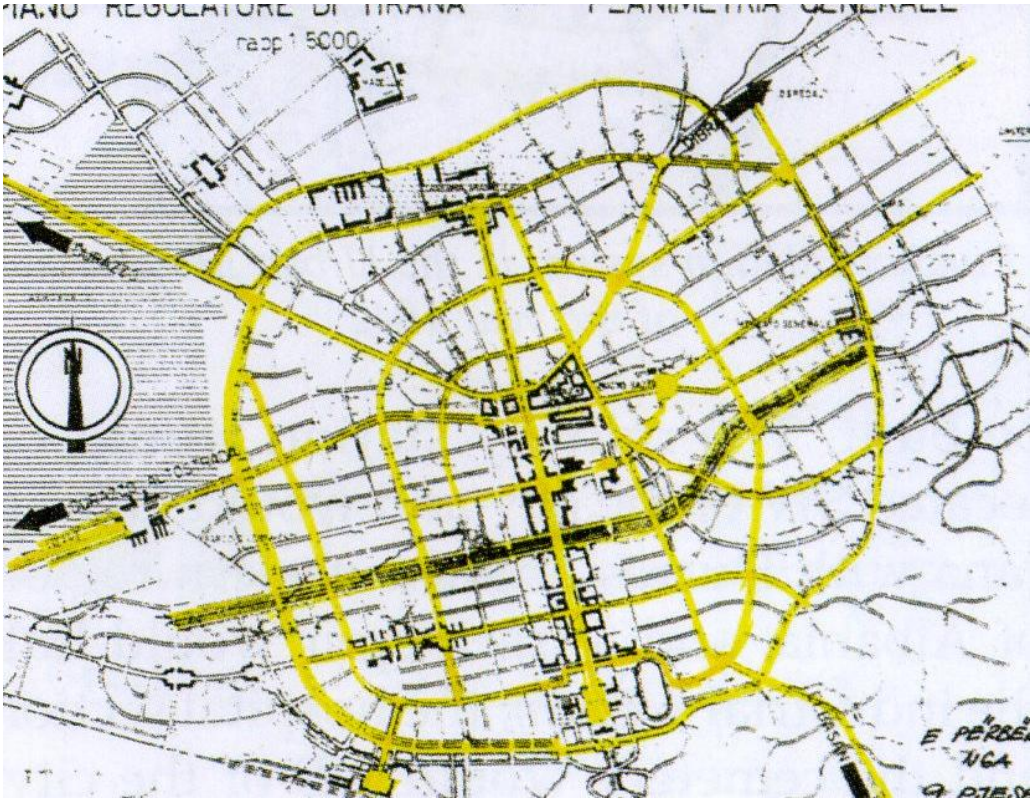


Figure 96: Proposed ring-radial road traffic system in the Urban Master Plan of 1942.

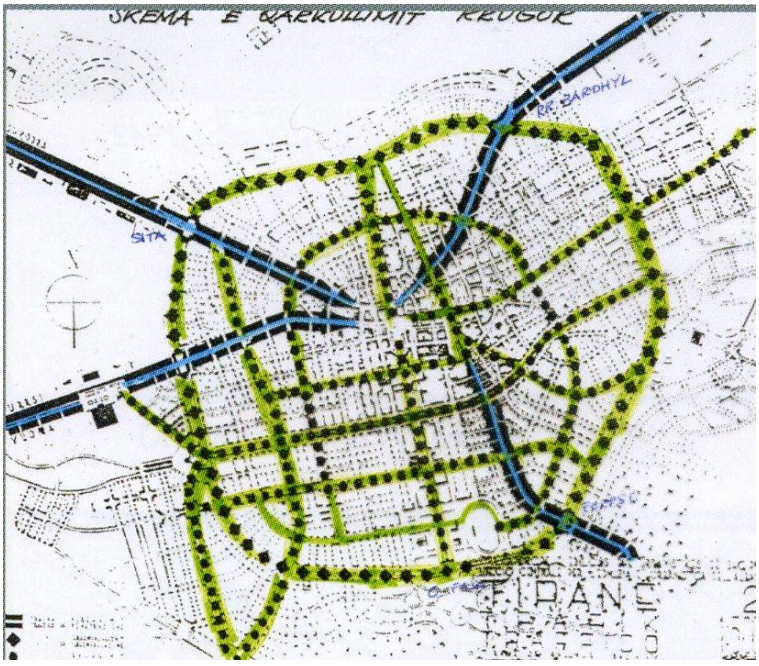


Figure 97: Road circulation system in the Urban Master Plan of the year 1942

Figure 98: Urban Plan of the year 1957

3.6. A Brief Summary and Post Socialist Situation

When Sulejman Pasha founded a new city in the middle of nowhere in 1614, most probably did not imagine this little town would be the modern capital city of an independent Albanian country. The city grew rapidly and spontaneously without plan until 1923. The declaration as the temporary capital city of Albania in 1920 and permanently in 1925 resulted the need of regulatory plans for the new modern face of Albania.

Tirana, unlikely from most of the European cities, has a short history which is neither dated to ancient nor medieval times. The nucleus of the city center was not very big and spread. Although the historical structure of the city was not very rich, the governments after the independence from Ottomans raced to "modernize" the city by demolishing the old houses, mosques, bazaar etc. The existing streets were extended and new wide and straight streets were built by bulldozers of power holders.

The new capital needs a powerful constructive element of urban regulations, to create a diversification between old and new, conservative and modern, spontaneous and planned i.e. a diversification between a city built by citizens and one that built by authorities.

Tirana built this line by the combination of the "Boulevard of Zogu I", the "Scanderbeg Square" and the "Boulevard of Martyrs of Nation"; *the* "spine" of the city which is straight without considering existing structure, property ownership and/or personal interests. While examining the construction stages of the spine of Tirana it may be seen obviously that totalitarian regimes' power helped to create: An architect of fascist Italy, Brasini designed, a man who declared himself as the king while he was elected as the president of presidential republic of Albania, Ahmet Zogu applied and a dictator who desired to rule the world by conquering and colonizing the other

countries[xv], Mussolini financed this spinal boulevard.

The boulevard represents the power of authorities; it is as powerful as the government. It is monumental and shows the stability of this power. It is not a simple boulevard or a wide street that is planned to solve the urban problems of the city; it is designed as the spine of the living body that holds it in shape. It is almost *unchangeable*.

Figure 99: The first nucleus at the intersection of the regional and local flows: Elbasan, Shen Gjergji, Durres, Shkodra and Kavaja.

[xv] Italy occupied Albania in April 1939 until November 1944

Figure 100: The nucleus of Mosque Sulejman Pasha, Old Bazaar, Mosque Ethem Beu and the creation of ministries' square

Figure 101: The displacement of the importance of the center from the square of Sulejman Pasha Mosque to the square of ministries

Figure 102: Cavities that remain after the demolish of the Old Bazaar, the creation of the background for the Palace of Culture, Hotel Tirana and National Museum of History

Figure 103: The articulation of Old Bazaar buildings with the new buildings of ministries, The Mosque of Ethem Beu plays main role for inflection and binds perceptively and physically to the square of Mosque of Sulejman Pasha.

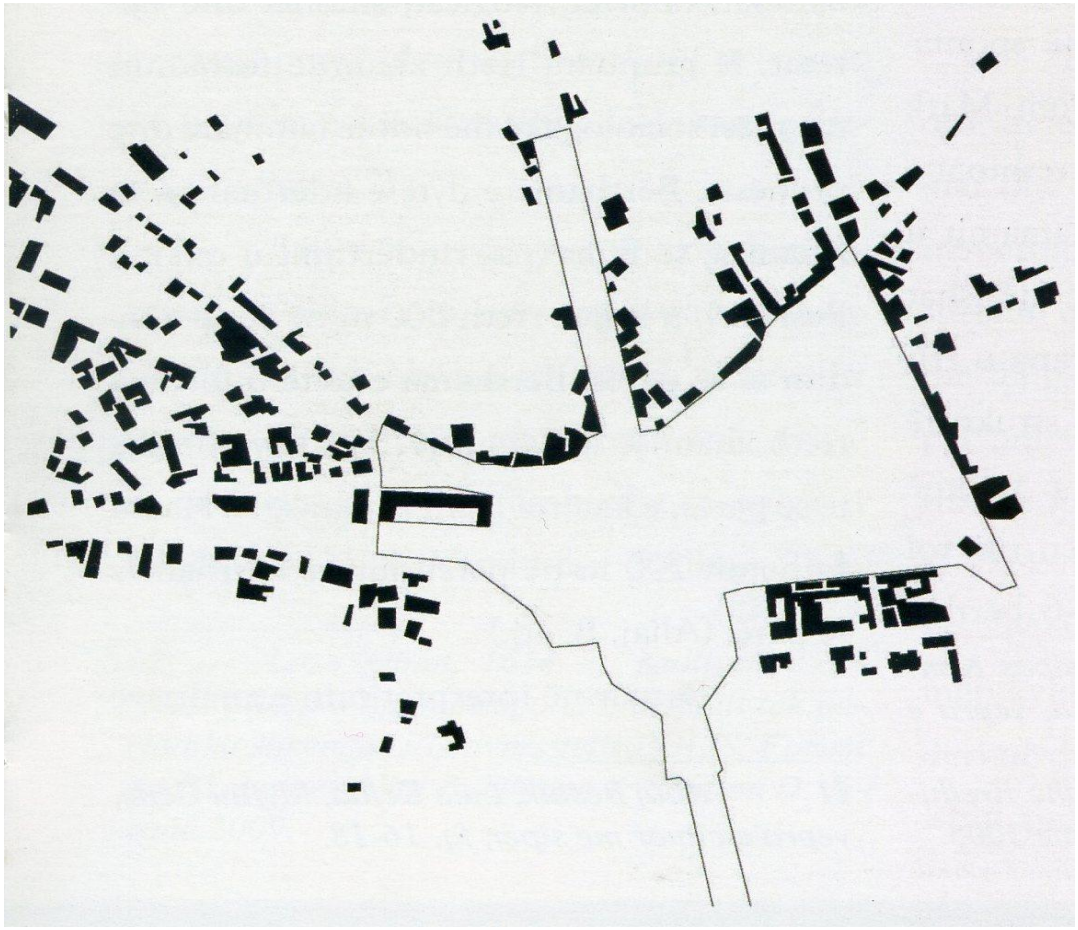


Figure 104: The Spine of Tirana and its effect area

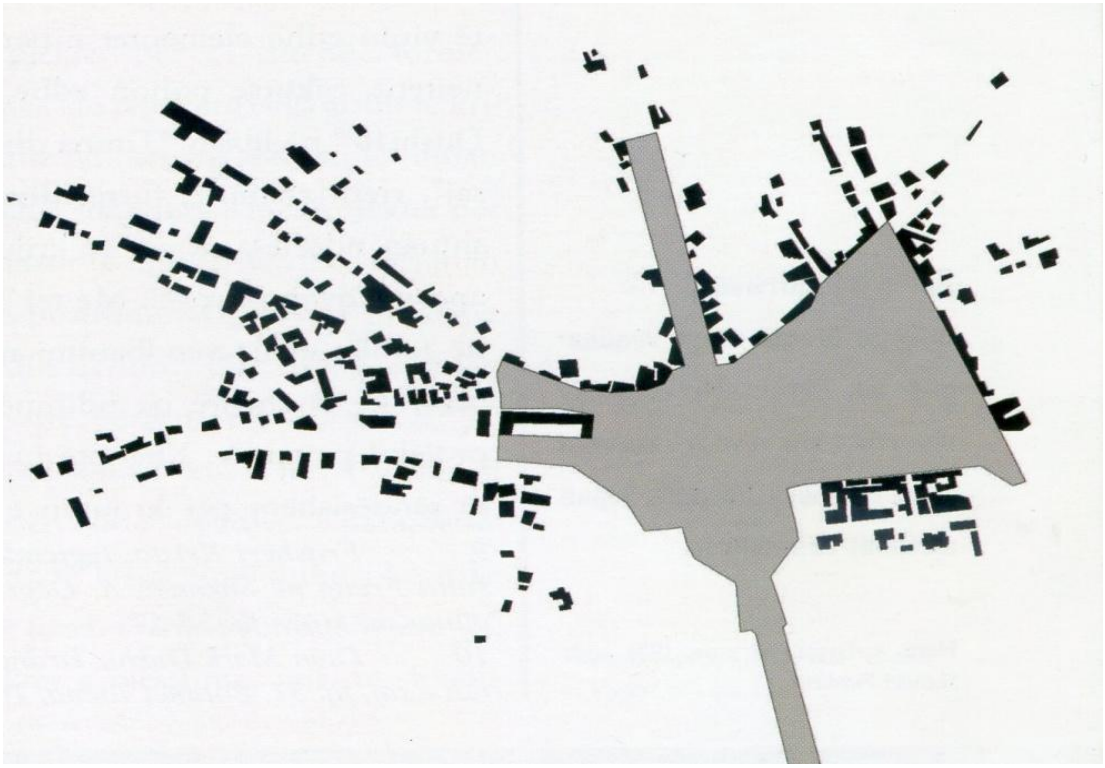


Figure 105: The zone affected by the boulevard and the new central business and administrative district.

The boulevard from the time of design till today has been changed several times in function, in contents, in the shapes and sizes of the squares and buildings, but the main role remains constant as the "spine" of the city. It has always a beginning and an end although the functions of them have been changed.[xvi] It has always been monumental and represents the modern side of Tirana and Albania.

The most powerful attack to the urban structure of Tirana was in the period of transition which was after the collapse of Communist Regime in

[xvi] Brasini designed the boulevard which begins with a sport center and ends with the palace of the king. It is constructed the train station and "Casa del Fascio" (The House of Fascism). Today station remains but the house of fascism has been changed to the University of Tirana

1991. That was the urban chaos time. As it is observed in many former communist countries of Europe, Tirana as the capital city took a considerable number of emigrations from other regions. There was a confusion of land-ownership. The new government was desperate to solve the problems of properties which had two or three legal owners.[xvii] The new central and local governments were inexperienced and poor. They could not resist to the needs and pressure of capitalist and liberal market. There was a lack of shops and offices in the central business district. First, the entrepreneurs built some small kiosks informally; then the municipality gave them permission of use annually. This caused an invasion of all parks, Lana River banks and squares, i.e. all the open lots. Even in the garden of Parliament occupied by these kiosks. By the time being these kiosks diverted to the reinforced concrete two-three storied buildings.

Until the clearance of Municipality of Tirana in 2000 these informal buildings without permanent permissions had remained. Even in this chaotic period the “spinal” boulevard had not lost its vital and powerful structure.

[xvii] There were several courts opened by citizens who had the deeds from Ottoman Empire, King Zogu and benefit of usage given from communist regime. Even most of the public buildings like university, hospital and museum were in court with the citizens who were pretending they are the legal owners.

Figure 106: The illegal “kiosks” in the Parku Rinia

Figure 107: Illegal buildings occupied banks of Lana River.

Figure 108: The clearance of Parku Rinia at 2000

Figure 109: Parku Rinia today

Figure 110: Lana River banks today

Today Tirana is the subject of several urban regulatory plans. The future of Tirana is projected by many Albanian and foreigner architects and urban planners. The variants are numerous. New neighborhoods, sub centers, road networks, industrial zones, etc. take places on the maps of Tirana. The common point of them is their spinal boulevard. None of them can neglect it or dare to change. The boulevard is not only too strong to change but also too constructive for the new development plans of Tirana city.

Figure 111: Winner Project of the Central Tirana Master Plan Competition (2004) by "Architecture Studio" France. Scanderbeg Square

Figure 112: Winner Project of the Central Tirana Master Plan Competition (2004) by "Architecture Studio" France. Spine.

Figure 113: Winner Project of the Central Tirana Master Plan Competition (2004) by "Architecture Studio" France. Details of the square

Figure 114: Winner Project of the Central Tirana Master Plan Competition (2004) by "Architecture Studio" France. Master Plan

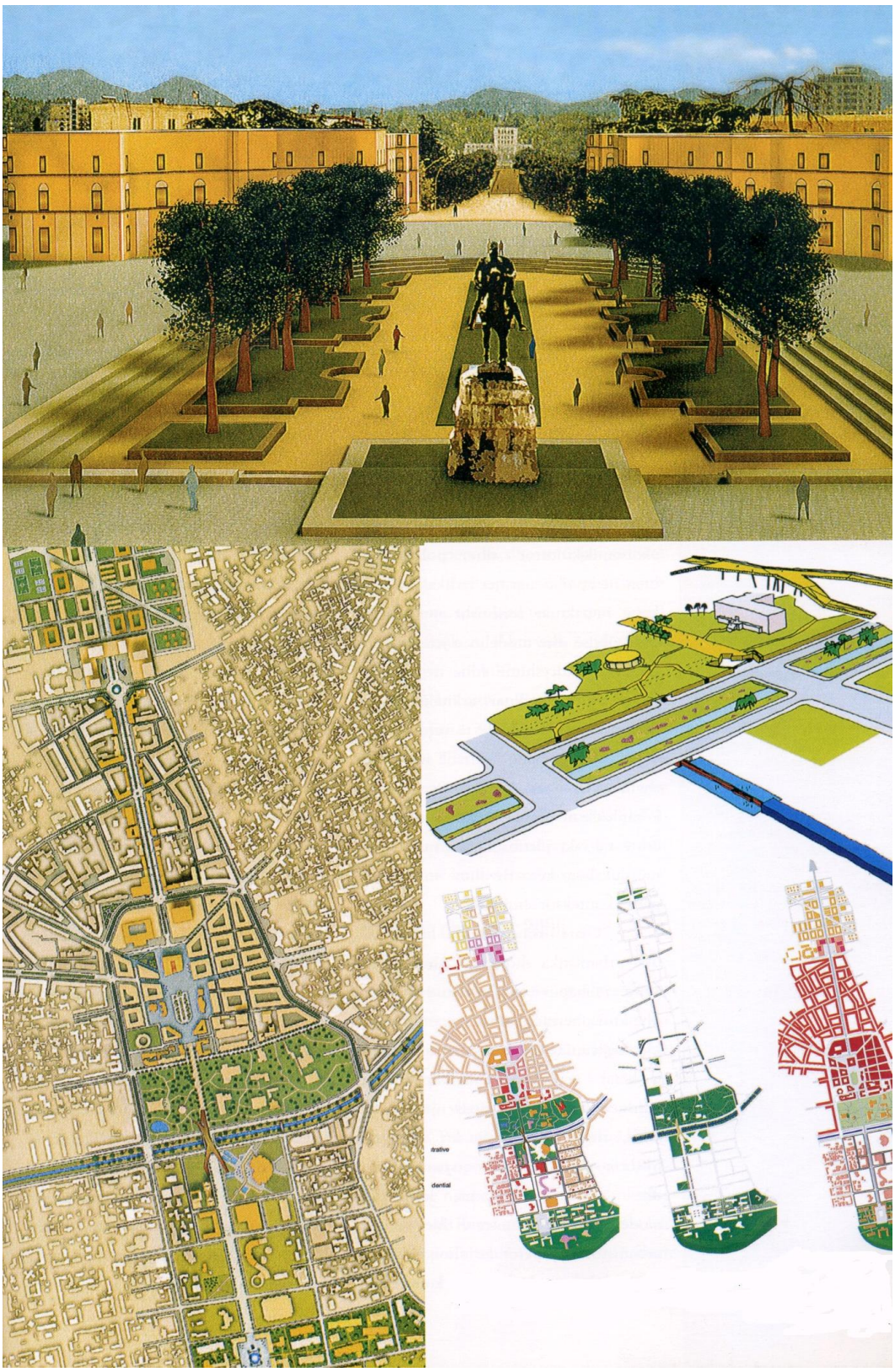


Figure 115: The Project of the Central Tirana Master Plan Competition (2004) by "Mecanoo Architecten" Holland

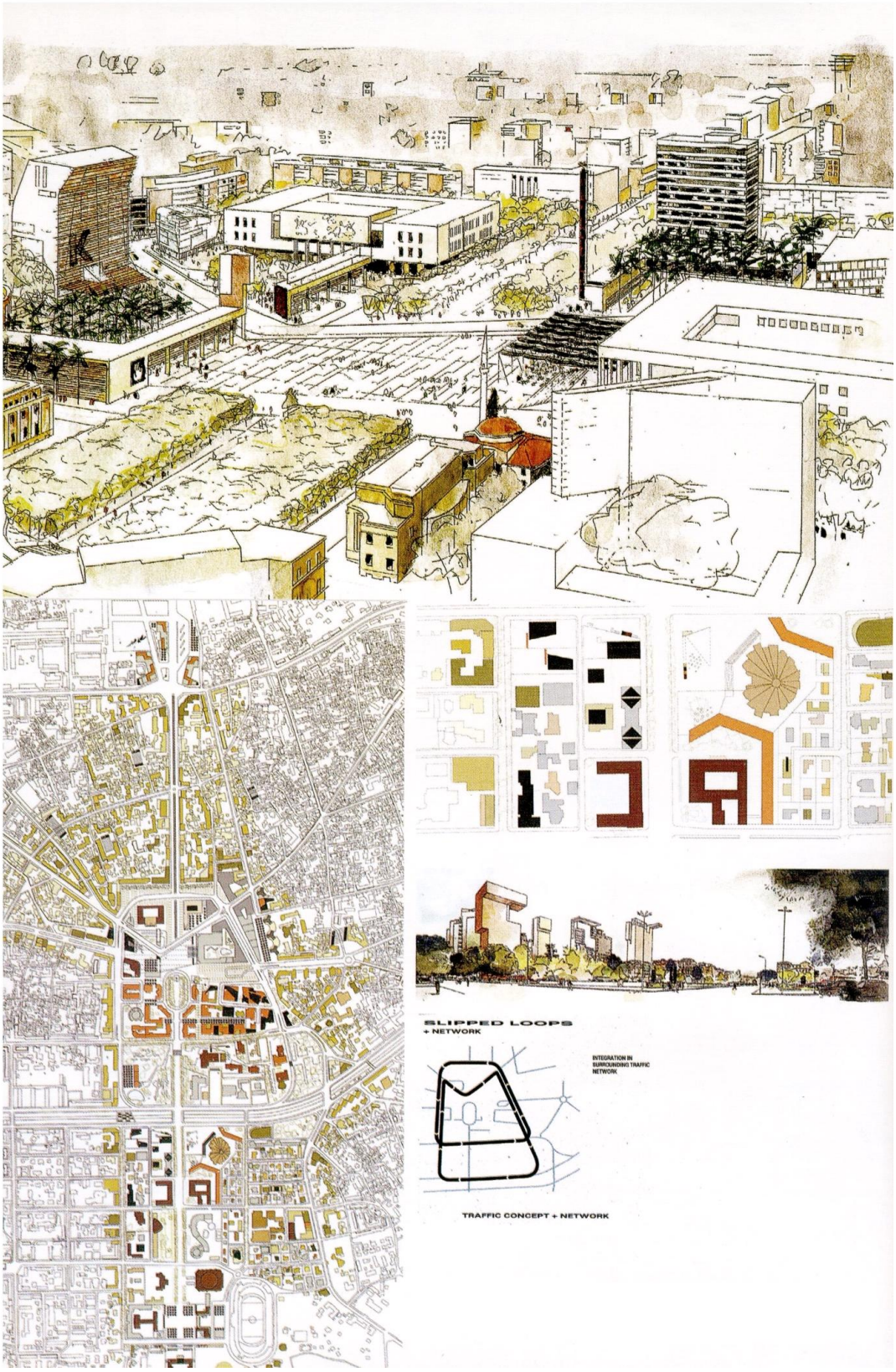


Figure 116: The Project of the Central Tirana Master Plan Competition (2004) by "Bolles and Wilson" Germany

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

The city of Tirana and its spinal boulevard showed us, what may be the consequences of an urban space form which is decided by the developers of a city. A path, a movement system, an axial street, a shaft, a thrust, or a spinal boulevard, whatever it may called, this kind of forms are very strong and handsome. It reflects the power of its authority. It binds and separates the old and the new structures of the city.

A spinal boulevard, like the one in Tirana, is a city shape that is so difficult to realize. Maybe that is the reason why it is so difficult to destroy or to change.

In this study the form of spine is observed how it is emerged in the new founded cities like Brasilia, Stalingrad, or Washington D.C.; or in the cities which are ruled by the dictators like Paris of Napoleon III, Rome of Mussolini, Berlin of Hitler or Copenhagen of King Frederik V. The construction of spine, as it is shown on the matrix, generally divided into three major reasons: Politics, function and form (design).

Table 1: The Major Reasons for Using Spine According to Cities

Cities	Politics	Function	Form (Design)
Athens	Religious: Panathenaic Way to Acropolis	Movement from region to Athens	Buildings were placed according to the spine
Miletus*		Social diversion	Gridiron system
Side*		Transportation between ports	Dominant on city development
Perge*		Movement system	Use of water, city gate
Phaselis*		Movement system	Between two ports.
Aosta*	Military	Easy to protect, easy to provide needs	Gridiron system. From gates to center.
Teotihuacan*	Religious: Connects temples	Easy to access	Monumental, social diversion
Rome	Religious: Pilgrim	Easy to access,	Some churches constructed after it
Monpazier*	Military	Easy to protect	Gridiron system
Ferrara	Monarchy	To divide old and new city. Movement system	New Palace, monumental, development toward spine

Table 1: The Major Reasons for Using Spine According to Cities (cont.)

Cities	Politics	Function	Form (Design)
Coppenhagen	Monarchy	Reflects the power of king	The Opera house was built at one end
Greenwich		To divide old and new, big and small structure	The gate of the city.
Nancy		Movement system, to divide old and new city	Regional movement system. New development
Paris	Dictatorial	Movement	Urban development outward
London		Easy to access.	Esthetic, monumental,
Savannah*		Movement system	Development through spine in to the jungle
Madrid		Easy to access, movement system	Linear City
Stalingrad* (St. Petersburg	Communism	Easy to access, regional movement into city, parades	Linear City, esthetic, onumenttal
Washington		Movement	City Beautiful

Table 1: The Major Reasons for Using Spine According to Cities (cont.)

Cities	Politics	Function	Form (Design)
Minneapolis		To get rid of old structure, protection against fire	City Beautiful, development along spine
Delhi*	Colonist	To connect ancient capital, movement	City Beautiful
Canberra*		Movement	City Beautiful, development toward spines
Berlin	Fascist	To divide old and new, reflects power	City Beautiful, monumental
Brasilia*		Movement	CIAM, City Beautiful, monumental
Tirana	Fascist	To divide old and new structure, easy to access	City Beautiful, monumental, city gates

* New founded cities

Whether it was constructed by the dictators or not the spine was a powerful form of an urban design. Most of the designers used it for its very basic features:

- movement,

- balance,
- upright posture,
- protection,
- shock absorption

In the case of Tirana that has been studied, these five features dominated the characteristics of spine.

Movement: The spine from the time that was constructed till present day has been the heart of the movement system of Tirana. All the transportation means use the spine as the main axe of the movement. Not only for the vehicles but also for the pedestrians, the spine of Tirana- two boulevards and a square- is at the junction of the whole road pattern. At the north end of the spine, the train station- although it is not very functional in these days- makes the movement feature of it stronger. In the case of Tirana, all roads, which are coming from the region, end at the spine. The whole movement system builds up on the spine.

Balance: The existence of the spine in Tirana creates a balance on the development of the city. Before the spine was built, the city developed spontaneously around several nuclei. There were no plan for the new development and the population of the new Capital increased rapidly. The construction of spine was a great tool to make order and balance on the development of new city. The spine also is the balance between old and new; modern and

conservative. After so many years, spine still has the same balance effect on Tirana city.

Upright posture: When Tirana was declared as the new Capital of Albania, first of all it was designed a boulevard and a civic center which form the modern, independent face of the country.

The center of Albania, i.e. the general capital should be one of the cities that are located in the middle of Albania and where the Albanian language will be spoken. And it would be even better than a new city be made in the middle of Albania in a healthy and beautiful place. Such a city, which we may call Skenderbegas, will be arranged in the most beautiful shape, with wide and straight-line streets, with nice houses, squares and everything necessary; and it will be enlarged and increase in a short time because all the Albanian elite and savants of the country will need to get together and built their houses there. So this city will be free from the wicked vices preserved by old cities; and since its habitants would be from all parts of Albania, the language of the city will be a cultivated and a general one for all over Albania (Frasheri, 1988:71-72).

According to the features of Frasheri for an ideal capital city, Tirana needed an urban development plan which would consist of a strong political and administrative center. That center holds the city and the country in upright posture.

Protection: The spine of Tirana has another feature that is protection. This strong urban form remains unchanged after so many political chaos like communism that neglect the old structure, World War II or Post Socialism that allowed the occupation of the urban spaces by the invaders. The spine protects the urban shape of the city. Tirana especially after the end of communism had developed without an urban plan. The constructions were boomed. On every single plot constructed a building without any plan regulations. Even though, the spine protected the overall form of the city

Shock Absorption: Tirana, maybe, one of the most shocked cities in its very short history. The city was declared as the Capital of Albania in 1920. Ahmet Zog in October 1928 announced Albania as Constitutional Monarchy and himself King. On April 7, 1939, Italy occupied Albania officially and declared it a part of Italian Kingdom. The end of the World War II brought a communist government in Albania. The dictatorial communist system was too centralized and inclined toward launching urban operations that ignored private ownership, with architects and town planners transform everything with one stroke of the pencil always within the limits and the political instructions of the routine Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party of Labor of Albania. The most powerful attack to the urban structure of Tirana was in the period of transition which was after the collapse of Communist Regime in 1991.

All these political changes have come towards the urban structure of

the city like shock waves. Spine absorbs these waves without changing its form. The vertical silhouette of the spine has been changed naturally but the spine protects the function and form until today.

Tirana, however, was a new born capital city with the King Zog who took the help of the architect of Mussolini. It is obvious that this was the advantage of Tirana to construct a boulevard of approximately 2 km long.

In the search of “ideal city” form, for my opinion, the spinal boulevard is in the first position far away from its opponents. It is powerful, beautiful and functional.

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