

Tirana, Regeneration Policy of the Urban Periphery

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ABSTRACT

This article attempts to highlight some of the issues and opportunities for the recovery of Tirana periphery. Tirana is currently in a process of constant transformation of its territory, particularly in the suburbs areas. This transformation has marginalized these parts of the city and so far has not been accompanied by studies or critical analysis for the retrain of these areas. From a compact part, monotonous and chaotic, the periphery should be transformed through mechanisms and different urban instruments, in a urban polycentrism situations. Facing which we should think in the polycentric system of Tirana is not only a spatial recovery, social and economic of the periphery or infrastructure disposition and physical restoration of buildings, but in a much wider action and extended in a articulated range. Through the interventions in the general urban structure of the city, by reactivating of strong economic and cultural development bases associated with strong strategic functions with public interest we may speak of "city" or "civilization" in these areas.

In conclusion the article will enumerate a series of points already successfully handled in several European cities and with the same interest that can be brought in different plans on the metropolitan periphery.

KEYWORDS: urban periphery, Tirana, polycentric city, regenerative politics, rehabilitation plan

1 INTRODUCTION

The periphery of the city has always been a delicate topic to be treated. In contemporary cities the periphery trends is associated with the articulation of different situations, such as degraded environs, settling space industries attracted by the city or the rehabilitation of suburban green belt. These main parts of the city should be an integral part of important regulatory plans. Return of the attention will transform these spaces criticized and marginalized, in important components of polycentricism in urban centers.

Tirana suffers also today an extreme difference in the urban, economic and social level, between the center and the periphery. The rapid demographic growth after years of dictatorship increased extraordinary the monotonous band of the periphery. This made the city to triple the number of residents to the suburbs, leaving immobile the only centre of the city designed by Florestano Di Fausto 80 years ago. Agricultural lands or free territories around the city were replaced with buildings that were unplanned by a regulatory plan and in most cases and in most cases illegal or without architectural projects.

2 PAPER FORMAT

The immigration to Tirana continues without interruption even in our days. The flow of new residents has found accommodation for their needs for housing in two main manners:

- Informal constructions state agricultural territories or private properties that were nationalized in the communist era
- With new low cost buildings, built with permission in new residential quarters without a regulatory plan of the city, with abusive partial plans orientated towards to the high-density residential construction.

In both cases, the problems remain the same. Both of these types of construction expansion are born in difficult urban situations where for various reasons are not guaranteed:

- regular traffic systems of different categories of roads
- public and private parking spaces
- public structures of educational, cultural and administrative
- parks and green spaces
- Constructions are chaotic and not respected the minimum insolation conditions, airing and good neighboring

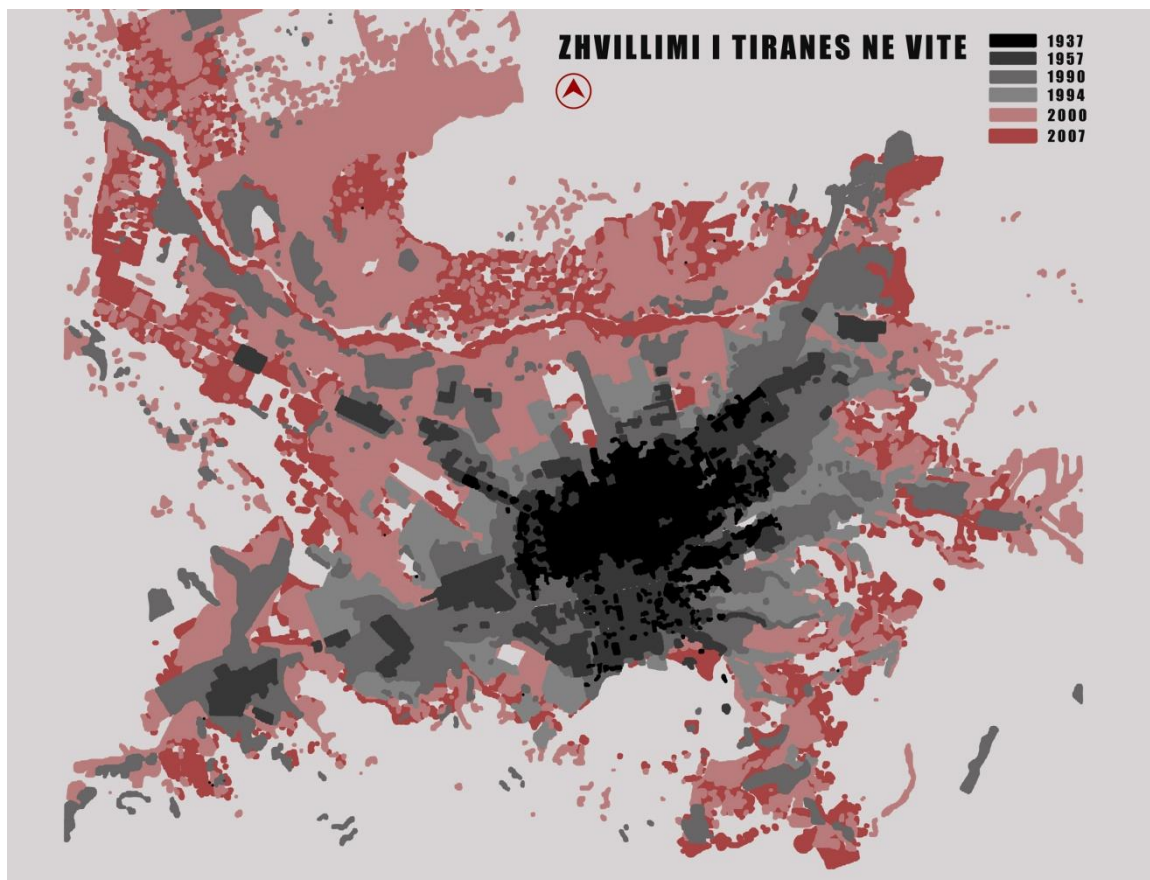


Figure 1: Demographic development of Tirana

However, if we want to go deeply in the reasons, consequences and conditions of the urban periphery of Tirana there are many arguments and examples that we can take into consideration. Now, around the main axis of monumental boulevard and spaces around it, as a hardened magma, extends almost in an uniform layers of the large periphery of Tirana

The main motive of this research is to identify and to evidence the instruments or regenerative politics of urban periphery. Public administration (municipalities and government) must urgently undertake urban requalification programs, for the recovery of suburban and urban spaces, with residential prevalence, through the strongest instruments of primary and secondary urbanization. Only through Shares that enable the improvement of the social and relational conditions, except urban and architectural, then we can say that we reacted efficiently.

We identify four elements necessary for the action orientation of design:

- The marginality element of the suburban areas in relation with the historical center should not detract from the cultural activities, the services and the connection with the urban tissue of the city.
- The identity element of suburban areas for creating reports with the rest of the city. This revaluation of such a zone would automatically require connection to the public transport system direct and articulated with the entire city.
- The multifunctional element, according to successful examples in many European towns, is based on the mixing of different social and cultural functions together with forms and spatial configurations within the same area. Strict application of the zoning monofunctional mostly timed out the territory from the continuing variety of the urban city life.
- The element of integral participation of citizens in the vision of the future city. This citizen participation, with success proven in various European cities, will increase the quality of urban development according to the requirement of residents in relation to the city and the needs of the area.

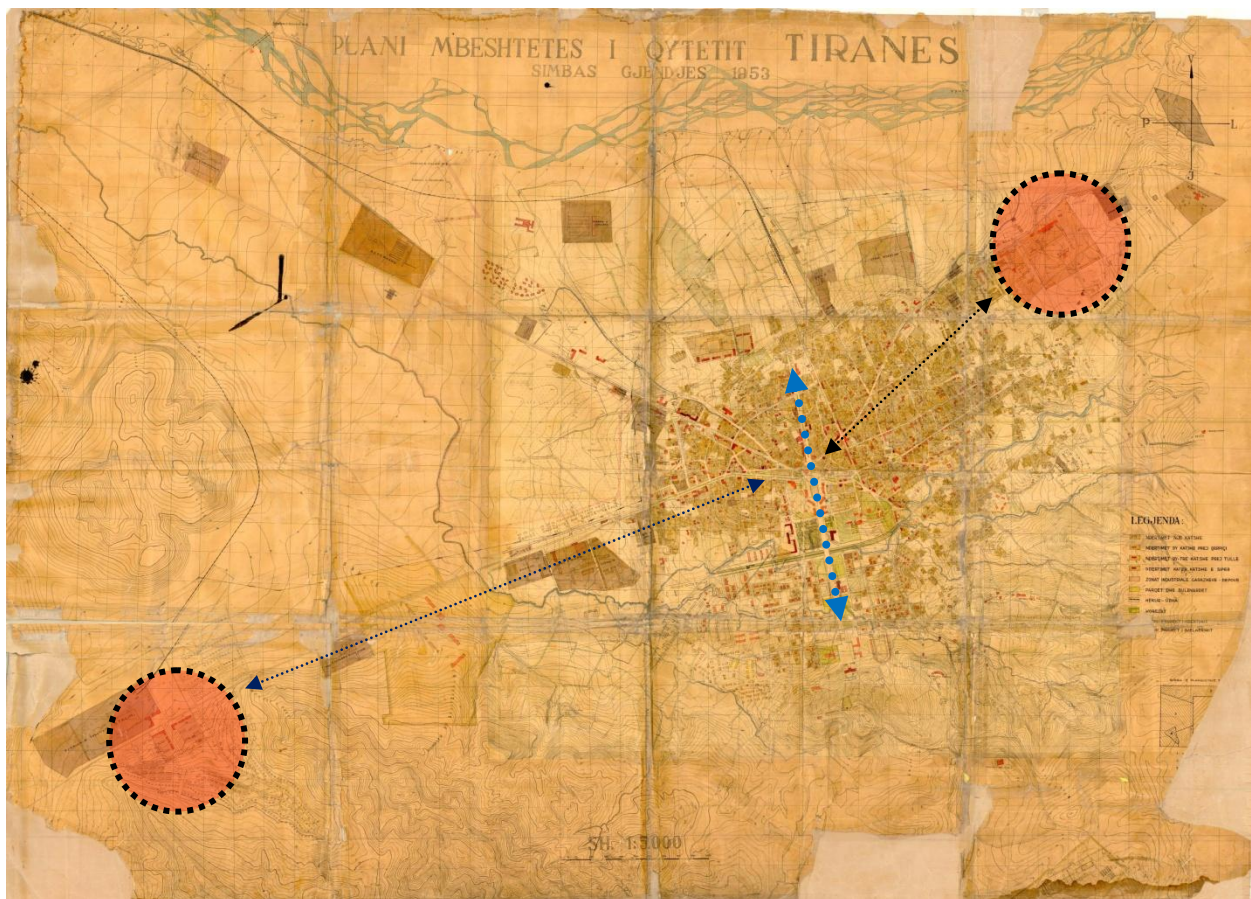


Figure 2: Regulatory plan of Tirana - 1953

Polycentric Tirana - the next challenge for the periphery

Once Tirana was elected the capital in 1921 at the Lushnja Congress, was a small town with a chaotic urban structure. Monolithic system of flats with one or two floors of the city was interrupted by the presence of any mosque or church. It was a town with ten thousand inhabitants. Brasini and Di Fausto plans in thirties, with the request of Ahmet Zogu, managed to configure and realize a new urban central system for the city. This system was represented by the presence of the grand boulevard and the main Skenderbeg square, as a catalyst to the new city center. With the arrival of Bosios boulevard was completed and enriched at the ends of it with strong public functions. In the regulatory plan of Bosio 1939-41, which was rejected after the war by the communist dictatorship, the new structure proposed of the city was a polycentric and polyfunctional body quite innovative for that time.

In the period of the communist regime with increasing of the capital population we had also the increasing of the residential space. New objects mostly complete empty areas between the villas or replace them near the main existing roads. During the sixties, linearly, was created two strong peripheral areas which are then returned to the new pole for the city. They were Kombinat and Kinostudio area.

Kombinat zone was created as a mixed industrial and residential area, according to the models applied in other countries in the east. This urban unit will function as an independent body in relation to the city. The Kombinat had its main square with a Russian neoclassical architecture and administrative mixed functions, cultural and social related to employees class who worked mainly in the Textile.

The second historic pole created was Kinostudio, where normally in the center of the system were studios and the major monumental film building. Relation to the other pole here we do not have a genuine central square, but the area had received some kind of independent multifaceted character.

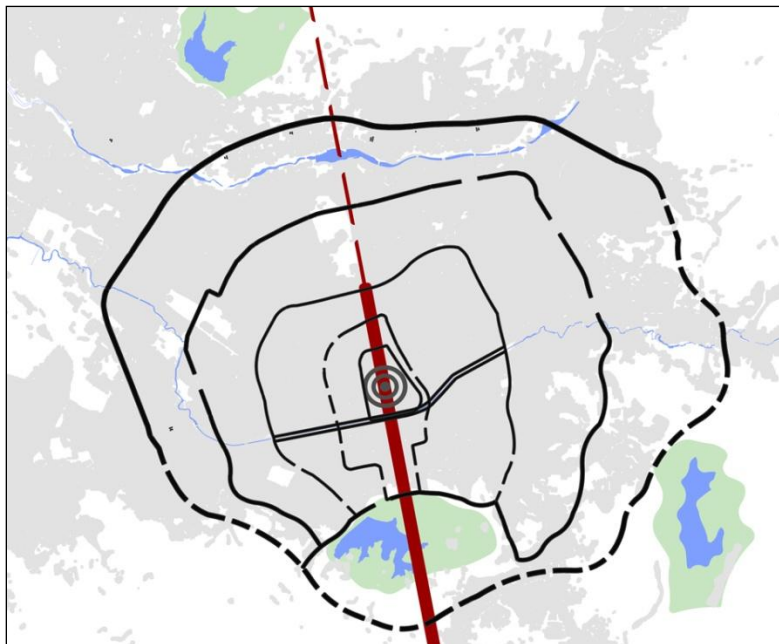


Figure 3: New ring system of the roads

One result of this modern city of Tirana is deformed and degraded periphery which is in an urban crisis. We can say that regression has been the loss of identity in the overall historical poles mentioned above. These join the massiveness of new suburbs last twenty years.

Their treatment requires sensible policy for the needs of different communities by avoiding the exclusive privilege of the area of the existing center or elite areas. So in some way, are required to re-qualify and formed the new centers, the core of the new space.

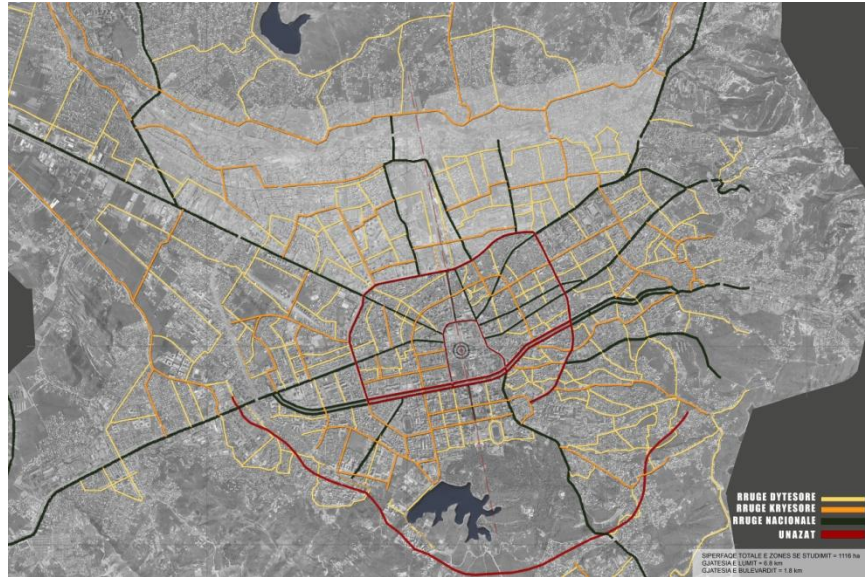


Figure 4: The existing system of roads

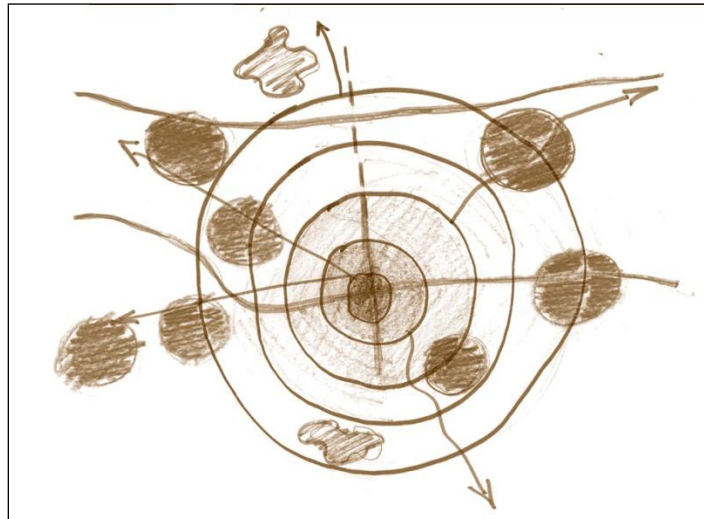


Figure 5: Decentralization concept of Tirana

Different elements of the strategy that will effectively serve to retrain the periphery must be seen depending on the country and speed of the action. The period available for the rehabilitation plan should be the medium and long-term. The main interests of intervention are: the quality of public spaces, transport network improvement and restoration of public facilities.

Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning, near the Polytechnic University of Tirana, made genuine scientific research and literature on potential new poles of Tirana including existing ones. Parts taken into account are Kombinati, Kinostudio end of the New Boulevard, former “Qyteti Studenti”, “Ish Fusha Aviacionit”, “Tirana e Re”, “Shkolla e Bashkuar” etc...

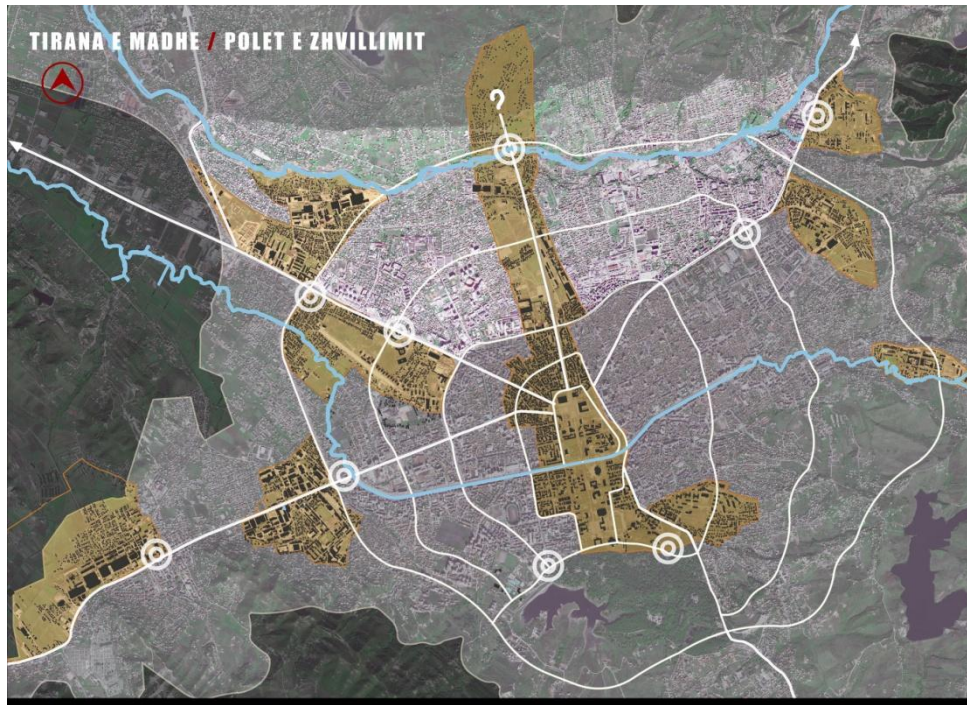


Figure 6: New poles of Tirana

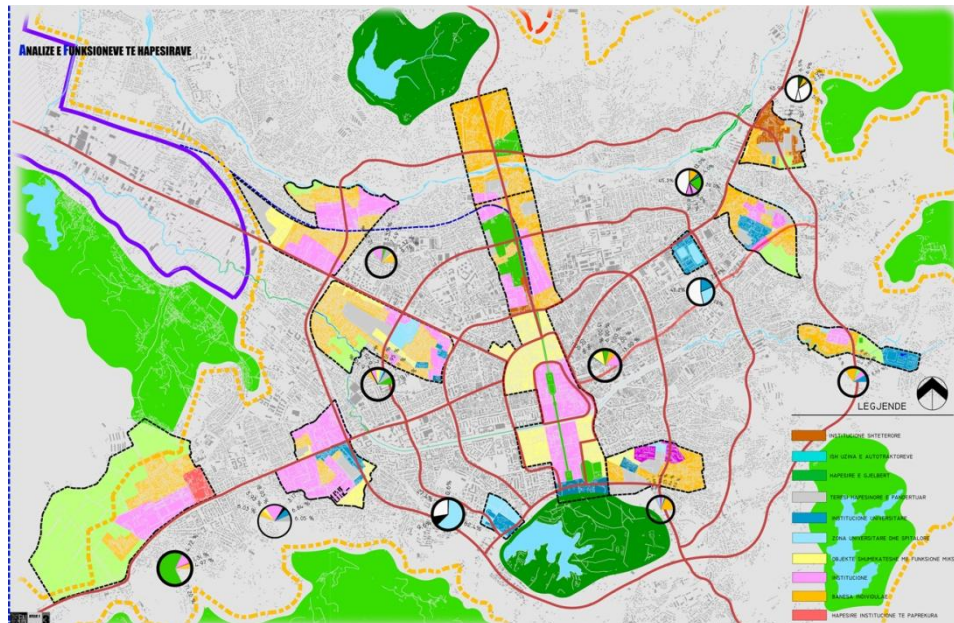


Figure 7: The potential of urban spaces in the new policentric system

These district exhibit different problems from relatively different urban contexts. The proposed interventions, although in difference for the quality and efficiency, are together simultaneously in three dimensions:

- The total requalification combined with the physical and environmental interventions on the territory as well as the social level interventions against exclusion and marginality of residents living in these areas. These interventions require a different way of requalification, taking care on "micro" dimensions, greater susceptibility on projects and special treatment of public spaces. At the same time is required a sensibility on social and economic problems or to minorities and different cultural identities.

- Reconnection of a sustainable transport treated as an action to improve connections with the periphery, while still conveying a rethinking of sustainable mobility scheme for the entire city of Tirana.

The recentralization, conducted through the placement of metropolitan level functions in the peripheral areas. These areas will be transformed into attractive point for residents of the capital being supplied with sports activities, commercials, recreational, administrative, etc.

3 CONCLUSION

Results of the urban research project led us in a reflection regarding the ways of implementation of the modern concepts in suburban areas of Tirana. To solve problems in these areas with large residential structures or even where structures are lower flats means to make extremely invasive interventions. The project should create urban centralities or relations with the urban tissue of the city by intervening in surgically.

The surgical planning do not tends to reject everything that is built to rebuild it again. It plans to transform degraded spaces or objects simultaneously proposing missing services, recreational space, new urban centers, energy and environmental sustainable treatment of buildings.

Important is and the urban operation on the interpretation of the identity of the area. This is done by identifying in these possible stem locations that can be transformed into a natural and intuitive way the real recognition of the identity of the zones.

Also this part is very important because sets off every criterion of foreign bodies to give the area a new identity, can generate negative effects and then result worse than the current situation.

Search of a new identity should not "bring innovation" but should "generate innovation". Quality projects involved in areas that need to be cured must generate new forms of urban tissue, but retaining the DNA of existing city and without creating genetic modifications problems.



Figure 8: Tirana, the future polycentric city

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