

Diachronic Growth of the Historical Urban Fabric of Tirana. - Typology of the “Multi-Familiar Dwelling Under the Same Roof”, As a Base Unit of this Urban Structure.

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays the historical area of Tirana is in danger of extinction, not only due to the economic and cultural diversity of its habitants, but mostly of the careless approach of planning on such historical urban areas. The further study will explain the urban and historical values of the urban territory trough the study of diachronic development of the urban tissue and its base unit structure, in order to better comprehend and highlight the territorial potentials of the historical area.

The historical urban fabric of Tirana, as many a like structures, is formed under a stratification process. Process that shaped and gives identity to such urban structures and the way these structures are created and develop makes them unique, as unique as a finger print. These features gives identity to such built areas creating a sense of belonging, creating mutual relationship between the people, the territory and define social behaviour and way of living.

The typical “Multi-familiar dwelling under the same roof of Tirana” with all factors, against, had evolve in a sustainable way in the territory where it was located, creating a suitable way of living and influenced the new buildings with its characteristics.

This typology creates an urban “status quo” and as a result of that we have a large part of the territory and its characteristics, preserved, the most important of them, the red pattern created by the roofs. These roofs seem very disordered but in fact they organize an even more complicated situation under their cover, making possible the unification of different social models.

KEYWORDS: Historical urban fabric, preservation, diachronic evolution, base unit, place attachment, social behaviour.

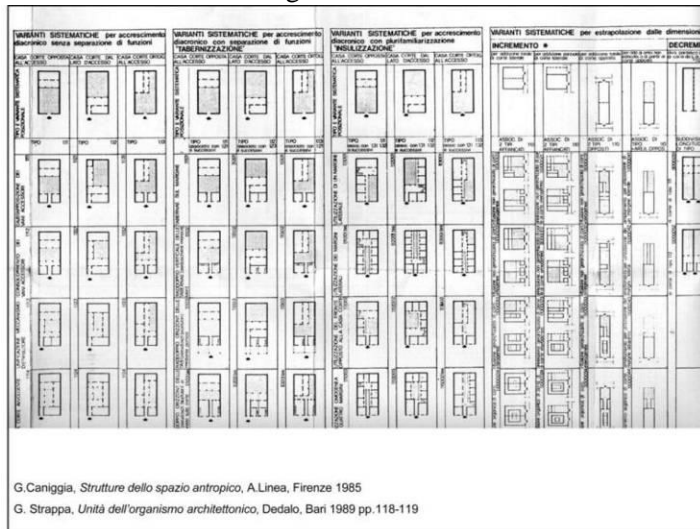
1 THE TYPICAL MULTI-FAMILIAR DWELLING UNDER THE SAME ROOF OF TIRANA

In the historic maps we can see clearly the Ottoman settlement patterns. Mainly these dwellings rise in big properties, with base module of Five by Five meters. As a typical ottoman dwelling they have a court yard facing the street in front of it. The court yard has dense vegetation with fruit trees, one may say useful vegetation. This court yards was irrigated with water that comes from sources near the city. Tirana's inhabitants are very close to the land, this can be seen in the development of the dwelling typology, the vegetation role in their life and the way the dwelling is related with the surroundings. The vegetation in the traditional dwelling creates a link between private and public space, this relationship is clear in semi-public space of the cluster street system and the low brick railings.

With the passing of time the occupied surface grows, this growth of the built surface is a consequence of the diachronic growth. Schemes of this diachronic growth are found in the cataloguing drawings of the urban structures base unit: "G. Caniggia, *Strutture dello spazio antropico*, A.Linea, Firenze 1985/ G.Strappa, *Unita dello'organismo architettonico*, Dedalo, Bari 1989 pp.118-119". In these schemes we find the urban patterns of the area. The most diffuse scheme of the case study area is that of "diachronic increase with multi familiarization (INSULARISATION)". Interesting is the fact that this scheme fits with most of the forms we find today and at the same time is one of the most diffuse scheme in the Mediterranean urban structures but with differences in built materials. The same scheme is found but with a simple form in the historic maps, after the study of them and an inquiry with inhabitants of the case study area we found that the most diffuse dwelling it is not the one with FIRE HOUSE but the one with HAJAT. A further study of



the growth in plan shows a development similar to the one with HAJAT but more linear and more articulated with the same height. This typology is poor in details but very similar in form and structure with the one with HAJAT in central ANATOLIA. It is clear the similarity in form and structure whether with the base unit of the historic urban tissue but also with the one with HAJAT. The materials and technology are the same with those of the historic area. The ceiling of this dwelling is the same as the one in reeds used in the typical Tirana's dwelling. This one is presented in more advance stage because a roof is present.



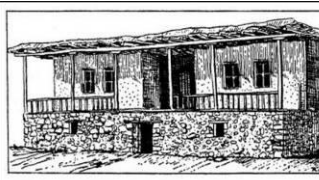
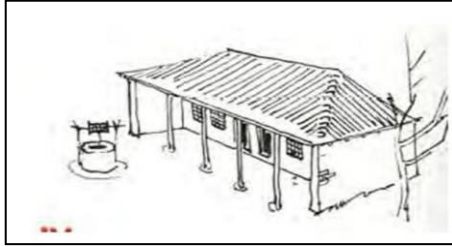


Fig. 8. Typical Central Anatolian rural house in crude bricks (From Rudolf Naumann, *Architektur Kleinasiens* [Tübingen 1971])

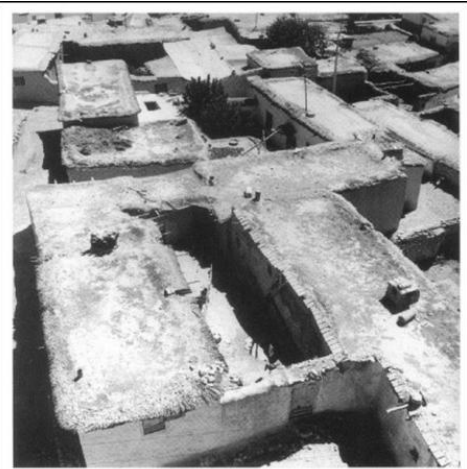


Fig. 7. Central Anatolian houses and urban tissue untouched by Ottomanization in Nigde.

The absence of the roof in the case of the central Anatolia may be an economic indicator, as the building information shows that in mud brick dwellings the most expensive element is the roof with ceramic tiles, therefore often happens that in this type of building after building the walls, a temporary covering structure is built which may stay for a while, taking a shape almost identical as the one in the image. In the old geographic map taken by “The Historical Atlas. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1911 /Ethnic groups in the Balkans and Asia Minor as of early 20th Century” we can see this area and central Albania as extremities of the Ottoman Empire and also this two region are on the same latitude Witch can explain the climate adaptively of these typology and the materials used.

The typology taken as a case study in origin was a rural dwelling of the city; this is determined by the distance from the centre. The development of this diachronic urban structure base unit it is shown in a schematic drawing which is realized in an intuitive way studding historic maps and inquiring the inhabitants of the case study area. Studding urban patterns of the present it is chosen one type of dwellings that better represents the characteristics mentioned above. The typology of the Tirana’s dwelling with common roof differs from the other types for the large dimensions and complex long articulation.



2 VEGETATION – PERCEPTION-SENSATIONS

Image shows the aforementioned characteristics. The pavement inside the dwelling indicates the typical layer of the area this pavement it found also in the semi-public areas realizing another kind of communication between spaces, the pavement assure a visual and dimensional connection between the public and private space but also sensational given by the vegetation. The space as it seen today is what is left after the diachronic development of this dwelling. Observing carefully the materials used with the information taken by the inhabitants of this dwellings, which is composed by five families with close blood ties, I note a tradition of building in good neighborhood which is characteristic for the area. Dense vegetation shows the connection of the people with nature, the vegetation is also the connection with space and sky because in

same cases this is compromised by alien settlements that are recently added to the historical urban tissue. The vegetation varies from fruit trees like tangerine, orange, lemon and vines to decorative vegetation which produces intense flavours during spring which are evergreen competing to vines that lose greenness during winter. An interesting development is the vertical vegetation represented mainly by vines,

Inside this court yard the vegetation start to have an opposite role with the ones at the entrance of the property. In a circumferential shape with a distance of 1 to 2 meters distance from the inner walls of the dwelling a linear decorative vegetation which makes the division from the centre of the court which seems as a public square inside a private space. The diachronic drawings referring the same periods of the historic maps that were studied



1923 SCHEME



1937 SCHEME



The dwelling begins their life as rural ones, where the surface of land should meet the requisite for planting and maintain animals. This dwellings evolve on a land that varies from one thousand to two thousand square meters, in some cases even more. The early dwelling develops from the aforementioned base unit. Even the large surface of land the dwelling take place on the border limit of the property, this juxtaposition suggests the importance of the land for these people.

During these years under the development of patriarchal model of the native inhabitant we note the beginning of a densification process. The first progeny built their home on the same land, but placing the new building in an intelligent way in order to occupy less land giving continuity to the tradition of valorisation of land. These years shows the transition of the dwelling from one family to multi-family similar to a condominium model. Is important to mention that the new building, preserve the same technology and lifestyle.

1953 SCHEME



During 1937 to 1945 the new phenomena on the development process of this dwelling is the land trade. This process of the land trade happened for economic reasons because at that time this territory was already set up as a residential area near the historic centre of Tirana and obvious very lucrative. In this period begin to crystalize the main characteristic of this diachronic typology which is the division of the base unit. This process develops the typical Tirana's dwelling (with common roof). Because of the internal divisions of the dwelling many rooms don't have windows. This process led to the creation of the zenith lightening "BAXHO" another typical characteristic of this typology.

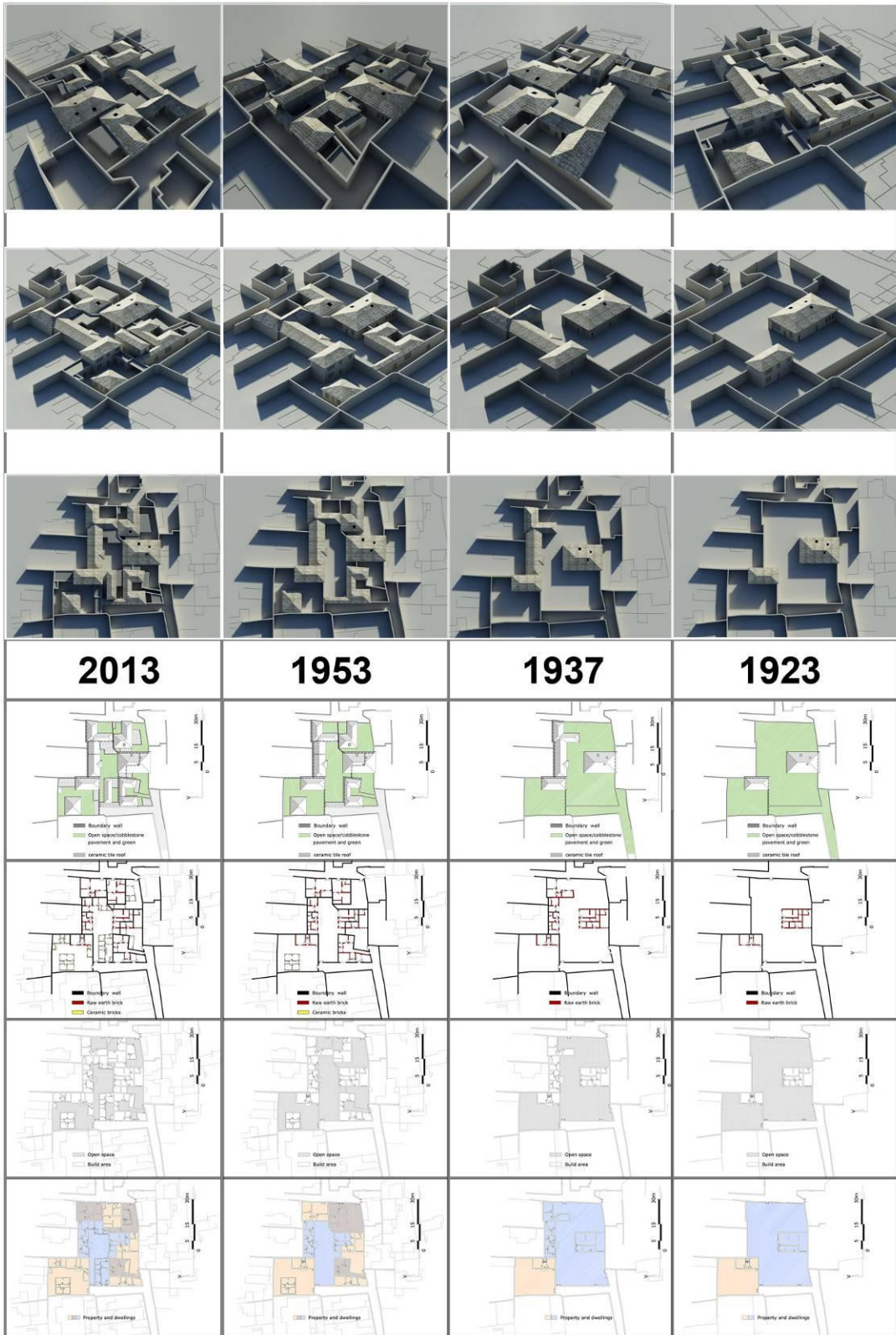
2013 SCHEME



From 1953 to nowadays new phenomena happened that influenced this typology. First one is the urban management which led to a spontaneous development of the territory where this dwelling is located, because this was a transitory stage for this urban situation due to the communism housing politics of the time. A further development happened under bad economic condition which was the building of addition constructions with flat roofs as the less expensive option on the market. These additions were built without any particular attention by the inhabitants as a result of the transitory condition of the building because it can be replaced by collective residential building in any time. During the nineties after the falling of the communist regime with the democratic era the control of the territory become inexistent and this brought significant alteration on this area. The new way of living (western way) has led to



importation of western models without any relation with existing architecture of the zone. In many cases damaged the traditional structure up to total destruction of them to make possible re construction of multi-story high rise buildings.



Typology evolving (Tirana multi familiar house with comon roof) ark. Oltjon LUGA

3 CONCLUSIONS

The typical multi-familiar dwelling under the same roof of Tirana with all factors against it, had evolve in a sustainable way in the territory where it was located creating a suitable way of living and influenced the new building with the same character. Due to the cohabitation under the same structure made possible for the people who live there regardless of their opinion of how to develop the common property to respect each other. The living under the same roof made possible the preservation of the structure contributing together for the maintenance of it.

The best value of this typology due to the elements aforementioned made possible the preservation of the urban structure of the area. It has not only preserved the physical urban structure but also the life style of the inhabitants of the area and the relation with nature under a fast metabolism of Tirana where the economic interests in profits don't take in consideration the wrong development that could take place in these urban territory which has historic and cultural value.

This typology hosting different social-economic models under the "same roof" where this term has both meanings physical and social and unifies these controversies. This typology for the social economic situation point of view brought a silent decision because in this case the building is located on two different properties maintaining the urban situation in a "status quo" and as a result of that we have large part of the urban territory preserved and all their characteristics, the most important the red pattern created by the roofs. These roofs seem very disordered but in fact they organize even more complicated situation under their level making possible the unification of different social models.

The roof take both physical and spiritual meanings, it works like a warm cover that under it take custody of all characteristics, social behaviours and place identity, and physically provide cover. In this particular occasion "Under the same roof" become more meaningful.

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