



INES MRAVUNAC SUŽNJEVIĆ

CRITERIA FOR PLANNING URBAN AND ARCHITECTURAL INTERVENTIONS WHICH IMPACT THE PANORAMIC IMAGE OF THE CITY

CASE STUDIES: EUROPEAN CITIES AS PART OF THE WORLD CULTURAL HERITAGE

KRITERIJI ZA PLANIRANJE URBANISTIČKO-ARHITEKTONSKIH ZAHVATA S UTJECAJEM NA PANORAMSKU SLIKU GRADA PRIMJERI EUROPSKIH GRADOVA SVJETSKJE KULTURNE BAŠTINE

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The dissertation examines the planning of urban and architectural interventions that impact the panoramic image of the city. The panoramic image, defined as an integrated visual construct comprising panoramas, silhouettes (skyline) and views, is understood as a multidimensional spatial expression of urban identity shaped by natural and anthropogenic features. The central thesis is that the panoramic image is not a passive outcome of urban processes but an identity framework that can be analysed, interpreted and applied in planning. The research therefore develops a system of criteria for assessing and planning interventions that influence the panoramic image of the city.

The definition of the panoramic image was developed through the synthesis of theoretical, historical and international heritage perspectives and the examination of its aesthetic, functional and symbolic dimensions. In this framework, the panoramic image integrates physical spatial characteristics, perceptual relations and the elements of panorama, silhouette and view into a single visual construct that reflects both the material structure of the city and its perception. Changes to the panoramic image influence the visual and cultural continuity of the urban landscape, as confirmed through the analyses of historical patterns in the formation of panoramic views and of the effects of contemporary interventions on their spatial and identity characteristics.

The methodological framework applies analytical, comparative and descriptive methods, typological classification, case study analysis and field observation within the approach of heritage urbanism. The research follows a multi-level analysis of European World Heritage cities. The initial sample comprised all 99 cities with formally protected historic urban areas, of which 56 explicitly recognise panoramas, views, silhouettes, the skyline, the image of the city or visual integrity in their Outstanding Universal Value statements. From this group, 21 typologically representative cities were selected, together with four detailed case studies – Rome, Vienna, Edinburgh and Dubrovnik.

The analysis examined the presence of panoramic attributes in heritage protection and confirmed that natural setting, morphological structure and the silhouette are commonly recognised as components of Outstanding Universal Value. It identified recurring spatial characteristics of panoramic images and their relationship to topography, settlement form and urban morphology, forming the basis for the development of planning criteria grounded in real urban contexts.

Across the studied European World Heritage cities, the panoramic image was found to be shaped by three groups of identity-forming characteristics: natural conditions that define geographical and topographic setting; anthropogenic characteristics such as urban scale, density and urban morphology; and the city silhouette formed in relation to the terrain. Together, these characteristics provide a stable analytical structure for comparative analysis. On this basis, a typology of panoramic images was developed, including types defined by spatial-topographic configurations, types related to perceptual complexity and types reflecting the relationship between natural and anthropogenic features, distinguishing static from dynamic panoramic images. The typology supports the interpretation of panoramic patterns in European historic cities and clarifies the spatial logic of their panoramic identity.

The four case studies further examined different planning systems addressing panoramic values in World Heritage cities. Despite differences in regulatory and analytical traditions, the cases reveal a continuum between restrictive conservation frameworks and adaptive models that integrate contemporary interventions into established identity contexts. Two planning approaches were identified: a conservation approach focused on preserving recognised visual spatial values and an adaptive approach aimed at ensuring coherent integration of new interventions. These recurring principles, confirmed in both the comparative sample and the case studies, form the conceptual basis for the criteria developed in the dissertation.

The synthesis of the theoretical, historical and comparative-analytical work, together with the identification of typologies, identity-forming spatial features and planning approaches, resulted in the development of a system of criteria for planning urban and architectural interventions that influence the panoramic image of the city.

The criteria were shaped by enduring principles identified in the comparative analysis, including the preservation of identity and visual recognisability, coherence with spatial context, the balance between conservation and transformation and systematic impact assessment.

The criteria are organised into four groups: (1) contextual and identity criteria, including cultural-historical consistency and continuity, preservation of Outstanding Universal Value and alignment with local spatial characteristics; (2) morphological criteria, including proportionality and alignment with the urban scale, preservation of the skyline, protection of views and the spatial form of buildings; (3) functional criteria, relating to land use, public open spaces and the integration of transport, utility and green infrastructure; and (4) criteria of sustainable management, including sustainability and climate resilience, management of tourism pressures and the participation of users and the professional community. Each criterion is defined through a clear rationale, purpose and qualitative or quantitative indicators to support its application during the planning process.

The scientific contribution of the dissertation lies in the analysis of urban spatial identity in European World Heritage cities and in the development of a theoretical and methodological framework for planning interventions that affect the panoramic image of the city. The professional contribution is reflected in the formulation of criteria and assessment indicators applicable in urban and architectural practice, while the educational contribution arises from the possibility of integrating the results into teaching in urban planning, architecture and heritage protection.