



# BOOK OF PROCEEDINGS

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**  
**13<sup>th</sup> - 14<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

ISSUES OF HOUSING,  
PLANNING, AND  
RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT OF  
THE TERRITORY

Towards Euro-Mediterranean  
Perspectives

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# **Issues of Housing, Planning, and Resilient Development of the Territory Towards Euro-Mediterranean Perspectives**

## **Conference Theme and Rationale**

Albania, along with other Western Balkan countries, has undergone significant economic, social, and political changes in recent years. As a result, housing, planning, and the resilient management of territorial development have emerged as critical issues. This is because these regions face significant challenges in providing affordable housing, addressing the impact of urbanization on the environment, fostering evidence-based decision-making on the territory, and bringing forth the commitments towards climate neutrality.

The organizers use the term “multi-modality” to define complex situations (in matters of territorial planning, management, architecture, housing, public space, technology, etc.) that have historically encompassed Western Balkans and Mediterranean cities in a logic of coexistence and value co-creation. A combination of knowledge and heritage that throughout time and history have given life to civilization in this region of Europe. The active involvement of Albania in the existing network of the Mediterranean Basin and the EU, through a joint action plan with UN / UNECE, and the Albanian and regional authorities, including reputable scientific bodies such as the Academy of Sciences of Albania, makes this conference even more intriguing to explore fascinating areas of research. The conclusions, to be considered as a stage for open innovation, will include recommendations for further scientific and applied research, projects, and events.

The geographical focus of the conference covers three dimensions: i) Albania; ii) the Western Balkans; iii) Euro-Mediterranean countries. POLIS University aims to focus on the above-mentioned research areas that are of common interest to both Western Balkans and Mediterranean cities, including, but not limited to: housing policies, urban history and architecture typology, innovation and digitalization in urbanism, energy efficiency, resilience and environmental sustainability, governance and smart technologies for city management, education and gender aspects in urban planning research.

In this regard the main aim of this international conference is to bring together scholars, policy-makers, and practitioners to examine the pressing issues of housing, planning, and land development in these regions, in a context of transition fatigue, climate challenges and post-pandemic realities.

# **Issues of Housing, Planning, and Resilient Development of the Territory Towards Euro-Mediterranean Perspectives**

## **Conference Aim**

The main aim of this international conference is to bring together researchers, policy makers and practitioners to examine the urgent issues of housing, planning and land development in these regions, in a context of transition, climate challenges and post-pandemic realities.

## **Objective**

- Consolidation of the cooperation network between Albanian and non-Albanian researchers, lecturers, managers, with the aim of participating in joint research projects at the regional and international level;
- Support of local authorities with contemporary data, on the state of housing issues, planning and sustainable urban and environmental management, as well as representatives of public and private institutions operating in this field.

The conference is organized by POLIS University (U\_POLIS) in cooperation with the Academy of Science of Albania, and supported by other local and international partners.

In the framework of resilience, the main conference theme is devoted to Issues of Housing, Planning, and Resilient Development of the Territory from a Euro-Mediterranean Perspective, including Albania, Western Balkans and the Mediterranean Basin. This event aims to bring together academics, policymakers, researchers, experts, practitioners, and stakeholders from diverse backgrounds to discuss and address critical challenges related to housing, urban planning, and the development of resilient territories.

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# **Management roots back to the city walls. History, present, and future**

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## **Abstract**

The terms “manager” and “management” are frequently used in the daily communication. Given the universality trait of management, then every type of organization needs managers and management. Principles of management have remained solid over time, and over all organizational types. Fundamentals are fundamentals; what changes is the organizational mission, strategy, structure, and culture. The latter make the specific vocabulary of a defined organization. Thus, if principles have remained unchanged, what has changed is how managers respond to environmental dynamics and complexity in face of uncertainty. While technology, in one side has been showing itself as problem solver, on the other side has created new complexity conditions to deal with. This makes present and future more intriguing, while extends an invitation to managers to reflect through new lens. The importance of management is historically related to the territory. Not only, but the first organizational position where the term “manager” found a place was the city. Thus, the denomination “city manager” brings the institution of management back to the city walls. This paper makes an effort to harmonize together history, present, and future of city management from an interdisciplinary perspective. It aims to reconcile the good management practices of the city by reviving the past as a timeframe of Chronos and Aion, exploiting the opportunities of the present from a Cairo time perspective, and imagining the future as a miscellaneous time Chronos-Aion-Cairo. This study considers the city as a viable system (i.e., a living territory) and a service system, able to survive and reproduce itself by being a service provider to its citizens. All these exchanges happen in complex feedback loops as facilitated by artificial intelligence and virtual reality. This metaverse perspective makes the case for “city-verse” and the emergent figure of “city-verse manager”.

Keywords:

City Manager, Viable-Service System, Smart City, City-verse, Moritzburg Palace,



## Management briefly explained

Today management embraces different connotations of the term. The following paragraphs of this heading unfold a multiple definition of management from a quintuple perspective: etymology, epistemology, discipline, activity, and practice.

Etymologically, the popularized English verb “manage” as a consequence of industrial revolution has its roots in Italian and French verbs “maneggiare” and “mesnager”, which are related with handling horses (Mintzberg, 2014). Similarly, the Spanish word “manejar” is probably related with ruling horses, governance and direction (Real Academia Española, 2023, August 16). The common root of the above terms are the Latin words “manus” (hand) and “agere” (to act).

From the epistemology viewpoint, the latest research (Reihlen & Schoeneborn, 2022) differentiates between the following management epistemologies:

- Epistemologies focusing on aligning scientific statements with empirical reality through enhancement of accuracy, explanation, and prediction.
- Epistemologies centered on connecting scientific statements with socially constructed realities formed through shared meanings and contextual practices, rather than objective realities.
- Epistemologies utilizing imaginative techniques like fictional scenarios, counterfactuals, or ideal-type thinking as scientific assertions, aiming to juxtapose them against empirical reality to foster innovative theory construction and critical evaluation.
- Epistemologies concerned with the integration of scientific statements into empirical reality and their potential to induce changes within it.

As a discipline, management is interdisciplinary, including most of the scientific disciplines and finding applications in almost all of them. This is because management is not a mere set of tools and techniques. In contrast, “A manager who understands the discipline of management will still be an effective, perhaps even first-rate manager with no more than minimum competence in managerial skills and tools. A person who knows only the skills and techniques, without understanding the fundamentals of management, is not a manager but merely a technician.” (Drucker, 1974, p.26). Thus, the universality of management can be self-explained by the nature of management itself, that according to Drucker is close to pluralism and institutionalism, emphasizing clear tasks, responsibilities, methods, and practices (Drucker, 1974). Therefore, management is about fundamentals.

As an activity, management means decision making. Managers are people who make decisions of any kind. However, scholars refer to management decisions mainly to those that are more complex in their nature, and present in dynamic environments that are uncertain. The relationship between management and decision making is elegantly explained by the Nobel Prize in Economics, Herbert Simon, as follows: “What part does decision making play in managing? I shall find it convenient to take mild liberties with the English language by using ‘decision making’ as though it were synonymous with ‘managing.’” (Simon, 1960, p.1). Regarding the complexity of management decisions, the Viable Systems Approach unfolds a perspective of management decisions related to value categories and intuition, where the managerial spirit navigates through decisional areas of chaos and complexity (Barile, 2009).

The management as a practice begins with the basic managerial functions. The first one is planning. For Drucker planning is not just imagination, but simultaneously design and action. Thus,

“Planning and doing are separate parts of the same job; they are not separate jobs. There is no work that can be performed effectively unless it contains elements of both. One cannot plan exclusively all the time.” (Drucker, 1975, p. 284). Following this path, and considering the current management theory and practice, Management has four functions that derive from the work of Henry Fayol (1916):

- Planning – setting goals, designing and implementing strategies to achieve them.
- Organizing – designing the organizational chart, matching people skills with jobs, allocating resources, defining communication and hierarchical lines, etc.
- Leading – empowering employees with different motivation techniques, envisioning the future, stimulating change and consonance.
- Controlling – monitoring performance and taking corrective action when performance deviates from standards. Checking for day-to-day effectiveness and efficiency.

### **The Management and the City**

From the historical standpoint, the management practice is old as much as the human history. Human beings, unconsciously or consciously, have used the four management functions in order to survive and evolve, from neanderthal to homo economicus. Therefore, planning, organizing leading/commanding and controlling are fundamentals that we find not just in human beings, but in some animals too. Regarding the history of management, the modern management school is the classical one (1911-1947), represented by names such as Frederick Taylor (the inventor of scientific management principles), Henry Fayol (the inventor of management functions), and Max Weber (the creator of bureaucracy), among others. So, in the classical school, the focus was on production efficiency and organizational structure. However, these scholars were missing an important detail: the human being with its psycho-physiological potential and limitations. Consequently, the behavioral school emerged as a necessity to respond to employee needs. Afterwards, the quantitative school, and finally the contemporary management theories.

Going back in time, 3000-2500 B.C.E., the Egyptian pyramids are a proof of relevant projects in antiquity which required tremendous managerial skills. For instance, 100.000 workers and 20 years were needed to build only one pyramid (Robbins, Colulter & Decenzo, 2020). It is obvious that someone had to plan, allocate resources (materials and people), supervise the project, and motivate people to make the job done. Those times, cities and city managers (mayors, administrators, etc.) had different names. But one thing is clear: there is a territory to be managed and construct infrastructure (e.g., pyramids), while there are responsible people for the territory (e.g., pharaohs). It seems that the management has originated with the territory and people that were responsible for managing a particular area. Not just the pyramids in Giza have had a managerial legacy, but other places too. Think for example the old city of Dyrrachium (the current Albanian city of Durrës). Since the antiquity times (5000-4000 B.C.E), Durrës was composed of three main settlements of multiple cultures (Kacani, 2023). This organization recalls the departmentalization in every type of organization; a typical managerial division that refers to the classical management school. According to Kacani (2023), the city of Durrës since its first traces has been service oriented (e.g., water supply, constructions, etc.).

The historical myth that management is “business management” has been debunked by the history itself. The first practical application of the managerial theory does not refer to a business enterprise. It was Frederick Taylor himself (the inventor of scientific management) that in 1912,

when he was called to disclose the scientific management principles before the special committee of the house of representatives in United States, declared Mayo Clinic as the perfect example of the organization who applies the scientific management principles (Taylor, 1926). Thus, he quoted a non-profit organization instead of a business enterprise. According to the father of modern management, Peter Drucker (1999), the first organizational position where the term “manager” was applied (as per the current understanding of the term), it was not a business enterprise but a city, and most probably it was the city of Staunton (Virginia) in 1908 that hired as a city manager Mr. Charles E. Ashburner (James, 1914).

### 3. The City as a Viable-Service System

Like many other organisms, over time cities have undergone several metamorphosis processes, in some cases maintaining a strong identity and, in some others, going through radical transformations. As the finality of a city is to survive over time, then we can define the city as a viable system or a system able to maintain a separate existence, having the scope to survive in its context by interacting with other suprasystems and subsystems (Hysa, 2018; Barile et al., 2011; Golinelli, 2010). Referring to Beer’s Viable System Model (1985), a viable system can be described as a system that survives, remains united and is complete; it is homeostatically balanced both internally and externally and furthermore has mechanisms allowing it to grow and learn, develop and adapt, and thus become increasingly more effective in its environment. Simply put, a viable system is any system organized in such a way as to meet the demands of surviving in the changing environment. So are cities too. Thus, they need Governing Bodies and Management in order adapt to complexity and dynamism.

In addition, cities are smart service systems – “intended as service systems designed for a wise and interacting management of their assets and goals, capable of self-reconfiguration (or at least of easy inducted re-configuration) in order to perform enduring behavior capable of satisfying all the involved participants in time” (Barile & Polese, 2010, p. 31) – and convergent autopoeitic systems, able to coordinate varied urban functions such as Smart Environment, Smart Economy, Smart Mobility, Smart Governance, Smart People, and Smart Living (Kirwan & Dobrev, 2022). Hence, the service agenda makes a city an autopoeitic system (Maturana & Varela, 1980) able to produce and reproduce itself through services given and received, enabling intelligence, self-regulation, and consonance with the whole ecosystem.

### **City-verse and the Case of Moritzburg Palace**

Previous paragraphs introduced the management phenomenon, its origins and the symbiotic connection with the city. Their relationship has been deeply influenced by the technological developments, which have increased the complexity and the demand towards City Managers for new resources, dynamics capabilities, and competencies. Progress in artificial intelligence, virtual and augmented reality, has opened the door to consider cities and managers from a metaverse perspective, providing to the city new dimensions and requiring to managers new skills for managing these new dimensions.

With the emergence of smart cities, the metaverse is a virtual way to rethinking smart cities that enable opportunities as well as pose challenges to sustainability from a triple bottom line perspective (Allam et al., 2022). Applications of metaverse in the city are so diverse (e.g., science, business, health, culture, art, economy and daily life), that according to Kemec (2020) it can also serve as an urban policy design tool. Therefore, a city-verse will require a city-verse manager like cities require managers. It is relevant for municipalities of the present and future to recon-

cile physical with virtual realities so that to explore and exploited all the advantages provided by this mix. According to Kavurmaci & Eraydin (2022), in the case of city planning and design activities, creativity is fundamental on how problems are defined, analyses are handled, and solutions are implemented. A fascinating example of creativity in merging traditional tourism with innovation is the case of Moritzburg Palace.

Moritzburg Palace, known as “Schloss Moritzburg”, is one of the most significant baroque edifices in Saxony, Germany. The palace gets its origins in the initiative of Friedrich August I of Saxony, later King of Poland (Augustus the Strong), and it was built between 1723 and 1736 under the supervision of Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann, the master mason who had constructed Dresden’s fortifications (Möbius & Karpinski, 1991). Today, the museum is a popular recreation area that together with the green surroundings and a lake provides a holistic experience.

In line with one of the components of metaverse, and considering its applications to the city castles and historical landmarks, at Baroque Museum Schloss Moritzburg the visit is enriched with a tablet called “HistoPad”. According to Histovery (<https://histoverly.com/en/>), that is the company behind HistoPad, this device is an augmented reality tablet created with the contribution of historians, archaeologists, and technologists to provide an interactive and immersive experience for visitors of historical sites and museums. It offers virtual reconstructions, 3D models, and multimedia content to enhance the understanding of historical and cultural artifacts. With regards to Schloss Moritzburg Museum, once inside the monument, the HistoPad can take a visitor on an immersive journey into the heart of court life under Augustus the Strong. Visitors are invited to join his courtiers for a game of billiards, and attend a birthday party for his daughter, Countess Orzelska. The Moritzburg Castle HistoPad is the second to be installed by Histovery outside of France, after Albrechtsburg Castle.

When you enter into the castle, the HistoPad is included in the admission price. With the device it is possible to access different spots and navigate through a journey of the 18th century with the options to: explore Moritzburg Castle at the time of Augustus the Strong and learn more about the Moritzburg celebration and the festive community thanks to augmented reality, 3D animations and high-resolution images; embark on an exciting treasure hunt, find hidden treasures and claim rewards like in a game; take a historic selfie to remember the visit; navigate through the rooms using the interactive map; scan the time portals in the historic castle halls; watch 3D reconstructions and models of exciting exhibits, murals and architecture; and move freely through the rooms and watch the castle’s history come to life through augmented reality (<https://www.schloss-moritzburg.de/en/events-and-exhibitions/histopad/>).

## **5. Future directions**

With the advent of technological revolutions such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and augmented reality, cities have begun to change and their managers to adapt towards the new realities. Cities like Barcelona, Singapore, Dubai, Boston, Copenhagen, London, etc., have already written their chapters into the world of smart cities. They have now improved services for their citizens in the areas of mobility, healthcare, security, water, energy, engagement and community, economic development and housing, waste, and so forth. These developments have already happened, and the same above areas will be dramatically affected by metaverse. Like it was the case of Moritzburg Palace, where the augmented reality enhances the tourism experience, so will be in other areas of the city. The challenge is that if in one side the city-verse (i.e., the city in the metaverse) is a very close new reality, on the other side the question mark is whether the city managers and the citizens are ready to absorb the complexity of this new variety. Recalling the

Ashby's Law of Requisite Variety (Ashby, 1956), where “only variety destroys [absorbs] variety”, then in order to afford the new complexity created by the metaverse, then the variety (knowledge richness or complexity) of a city manager and citizens should be at least equal to the variety (complexity) of the phenomenon. The problem is that the speed of technological advancements is so high that most probably many cities, managers, and citizens, are currently unprepared. It can be said that there is a gap between “machine techne” and “human techne”, which means that people skills must be further improved in order to collaborate with the computer skills. This is a responsibility of metasystems (e.g., governments) that should simultaneously consider high-tech and high-touch. Education plays the most crucial role.

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