BOOK OF PROCEEDINGS

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ICBE 2026

MAY 08th-09th, 2026
POLIS University, Tiranë

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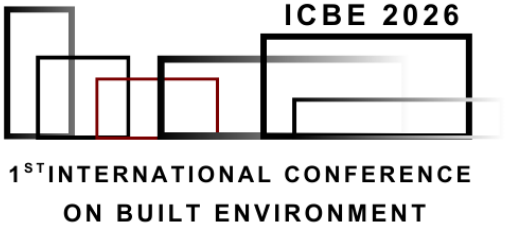
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1st International Conference on Built Environment

ICBE 2026

Conference Theme and Rationale

The 1st International Conference on Built Environment (ICBE 2026) was conceived as an international and interdisciplinary forum for advancing knowledge, critical discussion, and innovation across architecture, urban planning, engineering, construction, materials, design, and the wider built environment. Organized by POLIS University in collaboration with the National Agency for Scientific Research and Innovation in Albania (AKKSHI), the Academy of Sciences of Albania and the University of Ferrara in Italy, the conference brought together academics, researchers, practitioners, students, and industry representatives to exchange research findings, professional experience, and emerging perspectives on the transformation of contemporary cities and territories.

The conference theme reflected the increasingly complex challenges shaping the built environment, with particular attention to sustainability, resilience, technological innovation, heritage preservation, and socially responsive design. Contributions addressed sustainable architecture and green building, innovative construction technologies and materials, climate-responsive and energy-efficient design, disaster risk reduction, circular approaches to construction, and the integration of renewable energy. Equal emphasis was placed on digital transformation through Building Information Modeling, Geographic Information Systems, artificial intelligence, data analytics, automated solutions, digital fabrication, and advanced manufacturing.

ICBE 2026 also recognized that the future of the built environment cannot be approached through technological innovation alone. Urban transformation, cultural heritage, adaptive reuse, inclusive design, ecological thinking, art, and interdisciplinary research were therefore integral to the conference rationale. The scientific sessions examined topics ranging from seismic resilience, geotechnical engineering, and structural safety to urban fragmentation, public space, heritage conservation, adaptive environments, and new relationships between human and non-human systems.

Through keynote lectures, scientific presentations, case studies, and interdisciplinary debate, the conference encouraged connections between research and practice while promoting approaches capable of responding to environmental, social, cultural, and technological change. The breadth of contributions demonstrated the value of bringing engineering, architecture, urbanism, design, heritage, and emerging technologies into a shared academic framework for more resilient, sustainable, adaptive, and human-centered environments.

Held on 8-9 May 2026 at POLIS University in Tirana, with in-person and online participation, ICBE 2026 welcomed guest speakers and participants from Albanian and international universities, research institutions, professional organizations, and industry. Its sessions established a platform for presenting current research, exchanging expertise, strengthening meaningful collaboration, and identifying future directions for the built environment.

The event

The **1st International Conference on Built Environment (ICBE 2026)** is an interdisciplinary academic and professional forum dedicated to exploring contemporary challenges, emerging research, and innovative approaches shaping the future of the built environment. Bringing together researchers, academics, architects, engineers, urban planners, designers, practitioners, and industry professionals, the conference promotes the exchange of knowledge and encourages collaboration across traditionally interconnected disciplines. Its thematic scope encompasses sustainable and resilient construction, technological innovation, advanced building materials, urban transformation, cultural heritage, and interdisciplinary design approaches. Particular attention is given to the growing role of digital technologies, data-driven methodologies, intelligent design processes, and advanced analytical tools in supporting more informed and responsive approaches to architecture, engineering, and urban development. At the same time, ICBE 2026 recognizes the importance of environmental responsibility, cultural identity, social needs, and human-centered design in shaping contemporary cities and territories. Through keynote lectures, scientific sessions, case studies, and interdisciplinary exchange, the conference provides a platform for presenting current research, discussing professional experiences, and developing new perspectives capable of contributing to **safer, more sustainable, adaptive, inclusive, and resilient built environments**.

Objectives

- Promote interdisciplinary collaboration among researchers, academics, practitioners, and professionals in architecture, engineering, urban planning, construction, design, heritage, and related fields of the built environment.
- Advance the use of digital technologies and innovative methodologies, including BIM, GIS, artificial intelligence, data analytics, digital fabrication, and parametric approaches, in research and professional practice.
- Encourage sustainable, resilient, and climate-responsive approaches to architecture, construction, and urban development through innovative materials, energy-efficient strategies, and environmentally responsible design.
- Address contemporary challenges affecting cities, buildings, and infrastructure through scientific research, applied case studies, evidence-based approaches, and innovative design solutions.
- Promote the conservation, transformation, and adaptive reuse of cultural heritage, balancing cultural identity, contemporary needs, structural safety, and responsible urban development.
- Support human-centered and socially responsive urban transformation, considering public space, mobility, ecological systems, community needs, and the wider social and economic impacts of the built environment.
- Provide a platform for knowledge exchange and emerging research, enabling scholars, young researchers, professionals, and students to present innovative ideas, strengthen international collaboration, and contribute to future directions in the built environment.

Main Conference Themes

- Sustainable architecture and green building practices.
- Innovations in construction technologies and materials.
- Heritage preservation and adaptive reuse in the built environment.
- Digital tools and smart technologies in architecture and construction (e.g., BIM, GIS).
- Climate-responsive and energy-efficient design.
- Disaster risk reduction and resilience in the built environment.
- Circular economy approaches in construction and material usage.
- Integration of AI and data analytics in building design.
- Acoustic and thermal performance in building design.
- Renewable energy integration in building systems.
- Advanced manufacturing techniques in construction, such as 3D printing.
- Innovations in construction technologies and materials.
- Heritage preservation and adaptive reuse in the built environment.
- Disaster risk reduction and resilience in the built environment.
- Digital tools and smart technologies in architecture and construction.
- Advanced manufacturing techniques in construction.
- Geotechnical Engineering for Sustainable Development.
- Cartography and Geographic Information System.
- Computer Automated Solutions for Built Environment.
- Reliability in Civil Engineering.
- Urban planning strategies for resilient cities.
- Climate-responsive and energy-efficient design.
- Regulatory frameworks and policies impacting construction and urban development.
- Design in the Era of Anthropocene (Rethinking the Relation between Human and Non-Human Species)
- Speculative Design (with Attention to “Discursive” and “Critical” Design)
- Design and Cross-Disciplinarity (with Emphasis on Processes rather than Design Outputs)
- Inclusive Design
- Art and Urban Regeneration (Focus on Participatory, Collaborative, and Research-Based Practice)
- Relational Art and Architecture
- Monuments and ‘Anti-Monuments’ (Particular Attention to the Process of Designing and Building the City)

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The conference is structured around six thematic sessions, each addressing a specific area of research and practice within the built environment.
Each session is coordinated by experts in the relevant disciplinary field and is open to professors, researchers, PhD candidates, and other scholars and professionals contributing to the conference themes.

SESSION I
Urban Planning and Societal Impact

Chair: Dr. Gent Avdija

This session examines the relationship between urban transformation, spatial development, and their social implications within contemporary cities. Contributions address rapid urbanization, urban fragmentation, the transformation and loss of public space, informal and spontaneous development, and the challenges associated with balancing growth and modernization with human-scale urban environments. Particular attention is given to the evolving conditions of Albanian cities and to planning approaches capable of supporting more inclusive, sustainable, socially responsive, and livable urban environments.

SESSION II
Sustainable Materials, Resilient Construction & Smart Design

Chair: Dr. Endri Duro

This session explores innovative approaches to sustainable construction, resilient structural systems, and environmentally responsive design. Particular attention is given to sustainable materials, energy-efficient and climate-responsive strategies, prefabricated and lightweight construction technologies, and human-centered approaches to structural and architectural design. The session investigates how material innovation, technological development, and responsible design practices can contribute to safer, more efficient, adaptable, and environmentally sustainable built environments.

SESSION III
Technological Advancements and Seismic Design for Resilient Places

Chairs: Dr. Seyyed Behrad Emadi & Dr. Ornela Şen

This session examines the role of technological innovation and advanced engineering methodologies in developing safer, more resilient, and adaptable built environments. Contributions address seismic hazard and risk assessment, digital fabrication, parametric and computational approaches, transformations of building envelopes and prefabricated housing systems, and emerging concepts for future urban mobility. The session highlights how the integration of engineering knowledge, digital technologies, and resilience-oriented design can strengthen the capacity of buildings, infrastructure, and urban environments to respond to contemporary and future challenges.

SESSION IV

Cultural Heritage

Chairs: Dr. Nikolla Vesho & Dr. Marsela Demaj

This session addresses the preservation, interpretation, and transformation of cultural heritage within contemporary architectural and urban contexts. Contributions explore conservation strategies for historic buildings and sacred architecture, seismic assessment and strengthening of heritage structures, adaptive reuse, and the social implications of urban regeneration and heritage loss. Particular emphasis is placed on achieving a responsible balance between conservation ethics, cultural identity, structural safety, and the evolving functional requirements of historic buildings and urban environments.

SESSION V

Spaces of Connection: Art and Design for an Interspecies and Interdisciplinary Environment

Chair: Dr. Francesco Scasciamacchia

This session explores the intersections of art, architecture, design, technology, and the built environment through interdisciplinary and experimental perspectives. It investigates changing relationships between human and non-human systems, spatial perception, adaptive reuse, post-industrial landscapes, urban representation, digital heritage, and environmentally and socially engaged design practices. Through critical, speculative, participatory, and research-based approaches, the session examines how art and design can generate new forms of connection, reinterpret existing environments, and contribute to emerging cultural and spatial narratives within contemporary cities.

SESSION VI

Next-Generation Pioneers of the Built Environment

Chair: Dr. Flogerta Krosi

This session provides a dedicated platform for emerging researchers and students to present innovative, experimental, and forward-looking approaches to the built environment. Contributions span architecture, engineering, urban planning, environmental resilience, design, and related creative disciplines, reflecting the interdisciplinary character of a new generation of researchers and practitioners. Through projects addressing topics such as bioclimatic design, flood-risk management, structural technologies, architecture-inspired design, and critical interpretations of objects and social space, the session encourages critical inquiry, experimentation, and new perspectives on the future of the built environment.

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SESSION I

Urban Planning and Societal Impact

Urban transformation and growth: Rapid urbanization / Urban expansion / Contemporary city transformation / Growth and modernization.

Urban form and spatial quality: Urban fragmentation / Human-scale development / Public-space transformation / Spatial continuity and connectivity.

Society and the city: Social impact of urban development / Community needs / Inclusive urban environments / Quality of urban life.

Planning challenges in changing cities: Spontaneous architecture / Informal development / Sustainable urban planning / Transformation of Albanian cities.

The ground floor as an urban interface: the human-building relationship and the Loss of Urban Contact

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Abstract

Urban design and planning often treat the city as an abstract composition seen from above, giving priority to form, order, and large-scale spatial organization. This is the reason why the experience of the city at street level remains in the background. Within this condition, the ground floor becomes particularly important, since it forms the point of direct contact between the street, the pedestrian, and building. The ground floor in this study is treated as an urban interface by examining how spatial and morphological factors affect the urban environment, the legibility of public spaces and the perception of the pedestrian.

This study focuses on some selected segments in the city of Shkodra, Albania. Shkodra is shaped by the coexistence of several historical layers, transitional conditions, and contemporary interventions. This allows the selected segments to be read comparatively across different urban periods. Based on this, we understand how the building influenced by different periods builds or weakens the relationship with the street and the urban environment. The methodology focuses on direct observation, morphological analysis, photographic documentation. Attention is focused on some specific elements that create an active urban front. These elements have to do with rhythms, relationships between the interior and exterior, the articulation of thresholds, relationships between the building and the public space. These enable some conditions that enable interaction, daily use, stopping, communication.

The analysis suggests that urban fronts characterized by frequent subdivisions, multiple entrances, articulated thresholds, and stronger building street relations tend to support more intense forms of urban contact and public continuity. The urban fronts that belong to contemporary and post-socialist interventions are characterized by monotonous, continuous facades, with edges dominated by services and parking. These conditions weaken the mediating role of the ground floor and reduce the street to a corridor of passage However, the value of the ground floor lies not in its historical from itself, but in its capacity to support presence, legibility at the human scale, exchange, and interaction. In this sense, a more legible, more experiential, more inclusive urban environment comes from the revaluation of the ground floor.

Keywords: *pedestrian experience, urban interface, human scale, street-level urbanism, active front*

1. INTRODUCTION

Modern, post-socialist, contemporary cities focus on presenting the city as a structure seen from above, being designed and organized through plans, schemes and maps. This has led to a neglect of the human scale to see the relationship between people, roads, space, buildings. Attention is focused on the organization of blocks, the road network, the division of services and functions, the density of construction, etc. Of course, these elements also have their importance in urban planning, but this has led to forgetting how the city is experienced by people at street level. An essential part of the quality of urban life is determined precisely by the direct contact that the urban environment has with architecture between human interaction and the conditions that architecture creates for humans.

Brasilia is taken in this case as a significant example of this tension. It is a case known for its strong organization on a large scale. It is read very clearly through the controlled urban structure, the division of plots, functions, major axes, so it is a city that is read through a strict organization of an urban environment (Figure 1). However, the experience of a pedestrian in this case remains weak. This is because architecture and space do not have an intermediate element such as the experience that an active ground floor offers (Figure 2). This means that the city does not always guarantee a connection with everyday experience.

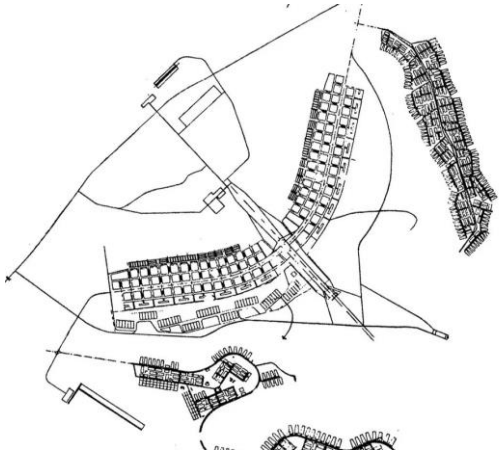


Figure 1. Brasília as an example of large-scale planned urban order.



Figure 2. Brasília urban life

The ground floor is the intermediary point between architecture and the street. It is the moment where the person, the pedestrian, experiences entrances, shop windows, thresholds, activities, porosity, signs of habitation, etc. It is also the moment when the importance or quality of public space is understood. The street becomes more legible when the ground floor takes on meaning through active use. When the ground floor serves only as the base of the architectural structure, with a blind, simplified, closed facade, the street becomes simply a moving corridor, losing the all-encompassing character that it can have when there is active communication with the building.

The idea of this study is based on the idea that the quality of urban life is not only understood by the organization or design of the city and that it looks good when drawn and seen from above, but also by the way it is lived and experienced in everyday life. This is why it should be analysed through micro-relationships, the human scale, daily movement and architectural boundaries. This emphasizes the fact that the ground floor should be a primary architectural element and a very strong part of the urban structure. It plays an important role because it mediates the interior and the exterior, making the building participate in the public life of the city.

In contemporary urban environments, this phenomenon is seen as a problem in this study because through the approach that these cities follow, they have brought about a loss of contact, man-building. The ground floor in these cities is conceived as a passive floor composed of privatized spaces, borders dominated by parking, blind walls. All of these reduce the intensity of the man-building relationship. This effect affects the visual character, comfort, urban readability and the level of activity that is conditioned by the approach that these designed cities follow.

This study focuses on three main objectives: first, to identify the spatial characteristics of active ground floors. Second, to interpret or analyse how these spatial characteristics of these ground floors affect the pedestrian experience and also the daily use of public space. Third, to compare the conception of these ground floors at a time level, i.e. in historical and contemporary conditions, to understand how urban transformation has affected the relationship between street, public space, and building.

Bologna is another significant case in this regard. There the ground floor functions as an important part of the urban structure. The relationship between the building and the public space, in this case, is conveyed through the system of porticos, part of the active movement of pedestrians (Figure 3). UNESCO describes the porticos of Bologna as architectural elements that play an equally important role for the building to which they belong but also for the public space. In this way, Bologna offers a strong typical example of how the ground floor of buildings becomes a mediating element between architecture and public life.



Figure 3. The porticoes of Bologna as a continuous urban interface.

The study is developed more specifically by taking into account the case of the city of Shkodra in Albania. Since Shkodra is a city that consists of a coexistence of inherited and transformed

urban forms, it offers a suitable context due to its strong historical urban structure. This city allows a comparison between road segments where the road-building relationship is intense but there are also road segments where this relationship is weakened.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Ground floor as an interface

The ground floor is considered as part of the architecture, with a mediating role that comes into direct contact with the street and the public space. The fact that it has a mediating role between architecture and the urban environment is because there the relationship between the exterior and the interior occurs, there the building addresses the public space, and precisely there it takes material form. For this reason, the character of the ground floor should be understood not only at the functional level but also as an architectural element interacting between the daily life of the city and architecture.

This urban interface does not take meaning only from the presence of various activities. Its quality is determined by the way in which this interface is organized by several mediating activities. Transparency, passages, entrances, stances, thresholds, permeability are those elements that form the scale with which architecture participates in the public aspect. A ground floor becomes part of the urban environment not only because it consists of functions but also because it enables service conditions. When these conditions are not and are missing, the building is disconnected from the street, making it present but not cooperative with the urban environment.

The urban interface also depends on the way the border is negotiated with everyday life. The thresholds that are used, the open doors, the different commercial practices, the forms of overlapping between the interior and the exterior increase the urban contact. This means that the lack of a building should not be perceived as a solid line, but as a zone of passage. In this way, the street is not considered only as a corridor of passage and movement but becomes a point where architecture and public life are placed in a relationship.

Bodily and perceptual experience

Urban space and environment are not perceived the same from above and below. At the level of the human scale, it is perceived by the movement of the body, different distances, visual sequences, etc. This means that the role of the ground floor is to shape what the pedestrian sees, understands and anticipates while walking.

This experience should not be focused on the abstract figure of the pedestrian, as if all pedestrians experience the city in the same way. This is because the street is read and experienced differently by an elderly person, a child, a person with disabilities, or someone who has different needs while walking. This is to show that the ground floor should not be evaluated only by visual vividness but also by the way it functions for different individuals. It should be ready to accommodate different rhythms of movement, presence with different

durations and different forms of bodily comfort.

Another element that is also important is time. An urban front does not function the same at different times of the day. There are fronts that are active only during the period when the shops are open, some are active because they support more continuous forms of presence. This means that urban relationships and contact are not only a spatial condition but also a temporal condition, because not only the form of the urban surface must be taken into account but also the rhythms through which it gains, maintains or loses urban importance at different times.

Speaking of another dimension of this experience, it is also the sensorial one. The street and its edges are perceived through sight, light, shadow, temperature, sound, proximity, texture, etc. Although the ground floors may have similar functions, they create different urban effects depending on the atmosphere they create. There are fronts that are open but perceived as harsh, there are also more modest fronts that are more inviting and welcoming. These are determined by sensorial conditions as they are also what determine whether the path is described or even actually lived.

Urban floor morphology

The ground floor and the street create a relationship through morphology. When an urban edge is articulated through changes, frequent openings, transparency, short intervals, transitions between public and private, diverse depths, it becomes more attractive and interactive. These conditions create moments where attention can be drawn, movement can be slowed down, can be accelerated, where contact can occur. On the other hand, long, monotonous, uninterrupted facades, simplified boundaries, tend to weaken the intensity of the street.

What matters in this comparison is not the age and historical values in this principle but the degree of fragmentation with which the urban front is composed and organized. If we talk about contemporary conditions, edges with fine fragmentation, structured according to smaller plots, produce a better rhythm of use, experience and perception. But the lack of these features in contemporary interventions where urban fronts function as continuous surfaces, where there are few openings and a weak communication with the pedestrian, make this front difficult to perceive, creating a division between architecture and the urban environment. All this means that the discussion is not about the fact of old or new, but about the morphology that creates readability possibilities in urban engagement.

Another specific case is those cases where urban fronts are read through activities but that they are simply service fronts. In some contemporary cases, the ground floor consists of the technical infrastructure of the buildings. These are mainly: ramps, warehouses, garage entrances, service areas, etc. Of course, in these cases the ground floor meets the street physically but not perceptually. These functions serve the building within it, automatically transforming the ground floor into a technical barrier.

The fact that cases belonging to the past are taken as good examples is because they preserve

more suitable conditions in the relationship between the road and the building. Their quality and value are seen in the articulation of entrances, small plots, the presence of various activities and services, making the urban front more legible and descriptive. This means that historical forms do not need to be copied, but it is suggested that contemporary urbanism should recover these principles without falling prey to nostalgia. This becomes a challenge, not to reproduce historical images but to produce ground floors that strengthen the urban role of the road.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study aims to analyze and examine how the ground floor principle creates the relationship between the street, the person, the building and the urban everyday. The methodology focuses on how the urban interface affects the legibility and use of public space through its morphological, spatial and perceptual character.

The research focuses on different segments in the city of Shkodra. These segments belong to different historical periods and this is a way to see and visually compare these periods. The relationship in these segments is presented as strong, intermediate and weakened.

The analysis consists of four complementary methods:

The first method is concerned with the selection of segments and their morphological reading, in order to identify the spatial characteristics of the ground floor. Attention is focused on the rhythms of the plots, frequent entrances, the degree of continuity or discontinuity of the facade, the articulation of thresholds, and the relationship between the edge of the building and the public space. Through this, we understand which fronts are more fragmented and which are less, as well as which ground floors play an intermediary role and which are dominated by functions and services.

The second method is concerned with the direct observation of pedestrian use. This is to understand how urban fronts are experienced in practice. The observation focuses on movements, stops, stances, expectations, interactions and how people select or avoid a certain street edge. This is a way to understand that the ground floor is not only valued through the form it offers but also through the ability of this urban front to invite or to expect different rhythms of use.

The third method has to do with temporal observation, this to understand that the urban role of the ground floor is different in different periods of time. The selected segments are also read through the rhythm of daily activity. This allows the distinction between fronts that maintain a social presence and those whose social presence depends on specific commercial hours.

The fourth method has to do with photographic documentation in different periods of time to support the analytical reading in this way. Actual photography and photographic documentation are read in relation to each-other; to see how different conditions of urban

interfaces offer different levels of urban legibility, public contact and continuity. This comparison is not made to idealize historical form, but to identify those morphological principles that articulate a strong connection between architecture and street life.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Since Shkodra was taken as a case study for this concept, then the analysis begins in the early period of the city, where based on some old photographs found, especially those of the bazaar but also of different segments in the city, it is clearly understood that the ground floor has been a very important part of the city, active and constituent of the urban structure. In this very important intermediate area, the exhibition of goods, entrances, observations, stops, interactions took place (Figure 4). The presence of shelters and large covered spaces, the high frequency, rhythm and energy, create a describable and quite readable urban front. It is clearly visible how economic and social life develops in direct contact with the street. It is understood that in this early period the building enters public life. From this, the street does not function only as a passage corridor but as a space where movement, posture, interaction coexist organically.

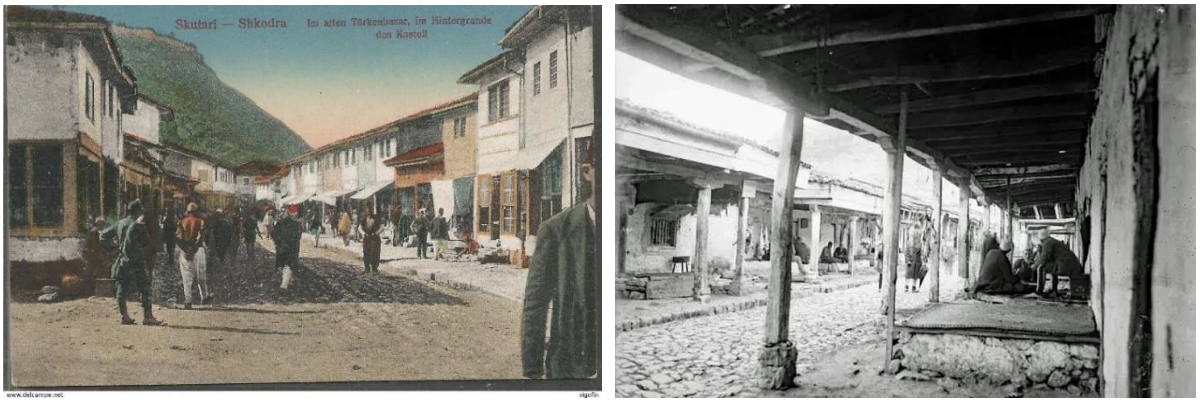


Figure 4. Ground floor activity in the historical fabric of Shkodra.

Active curtain floors and urban continuity

The presence of historical streets in Shkodër, preserved and lived every day, makes this analysis easier to understand all the typologies of street segments that we can place opposite each other. Historical streets show that the ground floors continue to be active. These streets are characterized by active facades, where the street is not simply a passage line but is like a livable border, often inviting to stop and interact. Small stairs, exposed double-sided fronts, old house courtyards, small urban rooms, thresholds, help and influence the mediation between public and private spaces. These elements remove the border between the building and the street, allowing an urban contact that is both spatial and social. The effect of this concept is not only related to the commercial effect but also to the feeling that the street is inhabited. The streets studied for this case are 2 historical streets. Kole Idromeno Road and Gjuhadoli Road (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Ground floor activity and relationship with public space on Gjuhadol Street.

Passive fronts and loss of contact

On the other hand, the new street conditions offer a weaker relationship between architecture, street and people. Long monotonous facades, with fewer openings, very few activities, borders dominated by parking lots, or ground floors simply as residential spaces but with zero contact with the street, have reduced the relationship between architecture and pedestrian life. These are signals given to the pedestrian that he simply has to walk, that there is no reason to stop and fewer opportunities for socialization or interaction (Figure 6).

This weak contact has several consequences. This weakens the continuity of the public sphere, allowing a separation between the built form and circulation and movement. Secondly, urban legibility becomes more difficult, because the street does not communicate with the use. Thirdly, it reduces the capacity of the ground floor to accommodate informal social life. In this way we have less pedestrian involvement. Selected road segments: Lushnje Congress Street and Baja e Vogel Street, Shkoder.



Figure 6. Selected street segments on Congress of Lushnje Street and Baja e Vogël Street, Shkoder, showing more passive ground-floor

The role of adjacent open spaces

Active ground floors are strengthened when they come into contact with small squares, open spaces and extended sidewalks. These spaces are important because they create opportunities and conditions for stopping, extended use, meetings. The combination of the two elements of active facade and small spaces gives meaning to both, and while one without the other often remains underused and simply transient.

Beyond nostalgia

All this is not to blindly evaluate a historical city. The value of the ground floors does not lie in the fact that they belong to the past but rather in showing the relationship that has been more direct and stronger between man, the street and the building. All those elements mentioned above that make a public space more lively and expansive, favor a pedestrian who reads, perceives and experiences the city. These are the qualities that must be re-evaluated today. This means that the goal is not the copy of historical forms as an image but rather the understanding of logic and re-application today in ways that belong to the time. Therefore, for contemporary construction this is a challenge, since these principles must be applied in new social, architectural, and economic conditions. Then this principle plays a very important role so that the road is no longer just a transit element, or passage corridor, but rather a lived space and an extended public space.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

This study analyzes and argues that the ground floor should be understood as a fundamental urban interface. This to strengthen an important relationship for the city, man-street, building. Taking into study 3 different segments in the city of Shkodra, makes us understand the important role that the ground floor gives to the street, the liveliness and above all the contact man-building when he is on the street. So, this principle contributes to urban continuity, the inclusion of the pedestrian in the urban environment, to the legibility of the public space. On the other hand, passive fronts only produce monotony, separation, loss of contact and simple passability.

Contemporary urbanism must definitely aim at building livable, more humane, more inclusive spaces by paying more attention to the articulation of fronts, the quality of thresholds, and the relationship between buildings and the adjacent public space, to understand that the city must be made of the cooperation that all elements have with each other and not simply fill the void without an intermediary element, leaving man uninvolved.

Several design approaches are understood from the study. First, legible entry points should be frequently highlighted. Second, private and public spaces should definitely be mediated and not live separately and disconnected from each other. Third, street-level design should be connected to daily use in a very active way. Fourth, open spaces should be connected to the boundaries that surround them by creating a common reading language, so that they do not simply appear as isolated gaps.

Further study regarding this principle will involve expanding the number of segments that will be taken as case studies, including interviews with passersby, but also making comparisons between Shkodra and other cities in Albania and abroad. That is, with cities that have undergone transformations, in order to see the role that these transformations have had in the way the city was formed. This would help to understand how different models of development or transformation affect the contact that the street has with the building.

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