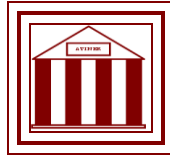


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**Methods of Identifying the Values of
the Historical Centers and their
Potential for Future Development**

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Dr. Gregory T. Papanikos
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Methods of Identifying the Values of the Historical Centers and their Potential for Future Development

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Abstract

The study aims to analyze the historical centers of European Capitals of Culture or historical centers from UNESCO World heritage list, in order to identify their potential for further development. The historical centers gather the community identity (local or even national) by its unique space organization, holding together the community's architectural and spiritual landmarks.

The city needs an organizing strategy of the built environment that includes the historical area of the city.

The proposed method for identifying and cataloging the potential of historical centers lies in finding the adequate criteria for analyzing the case studies.

The method is supposed to create a grid that contains on the horizontal line the diachronic evolution of the monument, and on the vertical positions the value criteria. These are:

- Historical value – it refers to the authenticity of a building or space and its ascertaining value;
- Memorial (Commemorative) value – it refers to monuments, places, memorial houses (intentional or unintentional);
- Functional value – it refers to the coherence between the initial and the subsequent destination of a building;
- Environmental value – it refers to natural factors that influenced the organization and development of the city;
- Volumetric value – it refers to spatial peculiarities of the built environment;

- Contextual value – it refers to the harmonization and integration of the built environment in urban context;
- Urbanistic value – it refers to urban tissue, to its morphology, to the city's silhouette and to the street system as a development factor;
- Strategic value – it sums up the spatial and memorial values with related strategies from particular elements that can lead to further development of the city;

These criteria will be emphasized on a case study: the Vauban citadel of Alba Iulia, Romania;

Key words:

Corresponding Author:

Introduction

The values are in fact the method used to analyze the historical centers which can highlight the main features within the historic city, in order to discover the directions for sustainable development that promote the cultural tourism and support the city's identity.

The recent development of the cities and some major changes (the emergence of automobiles, new functional or volumetric insertions), resulted in changing the perception of the historic city structure and spatiality. Françoise Choay believes that the historic city is caught in a 'double process of external dissemination and internal displacement'(101). External dissemination is explained as the appearance of standardized elements that can be found within the city (urban furniture, supermarkets, collective dwellings, etc.), seen as globalizing elements. The displacement refers to the architectural heritage, or to the city's transformation that occurred during the last century in order to respond to society's needs or to degradation and intentional / unintentional "forgetting" of the city's places. The author argues for context and heritage preservation of the old city and the places within it.

Solving singular urban and architectural sites is not a sustainable solution for the development of the city. The city needs a strategy in order to organize and prioritize the built environment interventions from the historic area. Strategies for conservation the natural, historical and cultural heritage are a priority for cultural tourism development.

Methods of Identifying the Values of the Historical Centres

Historical value

The value refers to the authenticity of a building or area and its ascertaining value. (eg : archeological sites attest the continuity of a community, its cultural identity, important events). It refers not only to singular buildings, but to the built environment that can describe the community identity. The cultural heritage (archeological, architectural or landscapes) supports cultural continuity and supports further development.

According to Christian Norberg Schulz, 'the existential purpose of a building (architecture) is therefore to make a site become a place, that is, to uncover the meanings potentially present in the given environment'(19) .The historical value is apparent from the human desire to maintain the identity and its relation with the past, by using the memorial markers that can be found within the historic city. This value, like all the others, is more than just about a built environment (seen as a physical space), it is about the living place of the people who inhabit there. Public spaces, streets, green areas can represent the past or a fragment of it from the history of civilization that is important for cultural continuity.

Alois Riegl (1903) defined the notion of historical value and the age value. The age value is characterized by the fact that it is not meant to keep the object

(works of art) in its original state, but on the contrary, the state of degradation potentiates its value. The historical value refers to the preservation of a monument in its original state. For many historical monuments it is difficult to achieve a displacement of the two values that Riegl emphasized: offering only the image of just one layer from the history of a building can diminish both its aesthetic and its ascertaining values. For example, Viollet-Le-Duc was the architect that restored and “updated” Notre Dame de Paris. He built a third tower over the intersection of the two naves and numerous granite details. The controversial restoration took place in the early nineteenth century, causing negative reactions due to the denying attitude of the original style. Nevertheless the actual image of the church offers a historical reading of its restoration history which potentiates the aesthetic value of the building.

Memorial (Commemorative) Value

The value includes physical places or buildings such as monuments, memorial houses, built assemblies and their ability to activate the memory and transmit information or create states of mind related to a particular event / person.

Alois Riegl (1903) makes a difference between intentional and unintentional monuments. The first ones were built for a specific purpose which they will maintain throughout their existence: to activate the memory by creating a link between present and a specific person or event. This category includes statues, obelisks, artworks, cemeteries, international exhibitions, etc. Unintentional monuments gained their memorial characteristic after their construction, due to a specific event that marked their temporality. These are the memorial houses or places that hosted major events.

Functional Value

The value refers to the consistency between the initial and the subsequent destination of a building. Although the aim of this value is to preserve the image of the historic city, it must be perceived as a variable that changes over time depending on the society needs.

Assuto Rosario (1983) believes that the ‘problem consists in the relation between the function and the representation just like between the sacred and the profane and it is configured when studying the relationship between the ideal and the real city, each with its historical and natural individuality, seen as a matter of harmony’(p.48).

Probably the best example for this value is the churches from Maastricht which were converted into a bookstore and a hotel. Although the new functions requested major interventions, the structure of the churches was not damaged giving the image of a reversible intervention.

Environmental Value

Environmental value refers both to natural environment with its traits and to the city’s structure resulted from the human “choices” made when the city emerged.

Natural factors can be divided into immutable features (topography, climate, soil characteristics, vegetation) or changeable features (a watercourse, forests, etc.). Natural features can mark the city's development and become dominant features (example: Portovenere, Cinque Terre, and the Islands - Palmaria, Tino and Tinetto).

Another important factor while "reading" the city is the time of the "dialogue" that can be: cyclic (seasons) or irreversible (historic time).

The historic city can be characterized by a double reporting: to the natural landscape with which it relates, and to itself by the street configuration and the general urban context re-created through the experience of residents at that time. Christian Norberg Schulz (1979) believes that historical cities 'are therefore hardly found in places where a particular natural character is revealed (such as Delphi or Olympia), but somewhere between these places'(p.55). He believes that all *man-made places* 'begin their "presencing" (being) from the boundaries' and 'the spatial structures developed during the history of architecture are always in one way or the other based on centralization and longitudinality and their combinations'(p.55). The difference is made where the environment "provides" a specific support for the urban specific structure.

Volumetric Value

The volumetric study of a city includes both single architectural objects registered in a particular building typology, assemblies or parts of the city's image and its silhouette.

Pierre Von Meiss (1986) argues that there is a dialogue in which the built environment has to meet a certain contrast between positive and negative, light and dark, big and small, horizontal and vertical, natural and artificially, etc. City's silhouette is resulting from the relationship between specific relief built in falling. In the historic city, regarded as a whole built city, volumetric accents define its silhouette and complete its image. Major landmarks are an expression of economic power, administrative or religious. Most historical centers are dominated by the towers of churches and city halls (Florence, Bruges, Prague, etc.). In other cities like San Gimignano, the 72 towers (initially) represent power and economic prosperity. From the street level, the volumetric perception is marked by landmarks and their relation to the streets, public spaces and the "rhythm" of facades.

Contextual Value

The urban context is referring to the continuity of urban structures and to the way that architectural styles are composing the city's places. In the historic city, the built environment is subordinated to the public space. Tom Schumacher (1971) considers the notion of context as 'less about what the surrounding buildings look like and more about the hierarchy between buildings and exterior public space, where exterior public space is given priority over building form and interior space' and the architecture 'as a dialogue with its surroundings, both in the immediate physical sense [and] as a historical continuum.'(p.276).

Francoise Choay says that the new buildings are out of scale in the historic center and questions their existence related in terms of today urbanity as a way of thinking the cultural heritage. The context value has its foundation in the relationship between the buildings of the historic center and how the different eras understood the continuity of architecture.

The importance of Viena's historical center was highlighted by R. Baham in the introduction of a draft plan for the city: 'It is appropriate here to respect the beauty and meet the requirements of sanitation and proper circulation through the existing heritage conservation in parallel with the striving to bring their own improvements and to meet modern demands.' (Eg: in Rome, the continuity of architecture has its explanation in buildings "language" which, although coming from different stylistic periods were "blended" so that it would form a synergistic urban tissue).

Urban Value

The urbanism as an organizing method for the built environment is characterized by the way that urban tissue has grown, influenced by natural, economic, political and social factors. The urban system can reveal unique structures that can sustain the city's development. The natural factors refer to the topography of the place and its influence on the urban tissue (towns built in valleys or on hills, port towns, built along a river or on plain terrains). The economic factor refers to the way in which the city's genesis was influenced by the main trade routes (continental or maritime) or resources. The political factors (administration, religion, strategic locations, etc) are highlighted by the presence of public spaces centred around the main buildings of the city (church, city hall, citadel/fortress). The social factors ushered in the emergence of some cities. For example, (Rossario Assunto) the ancient cities were built due to the way that people back then 'understood not only to make a function, but also a representation of infinite' (10).

Strategical Value

The strategical value sums up the spatial and memorial values, and along with related strategies aims to lead to a method that reveals a sustainable development of historic cities. The classification and the arrangement of values can reveal the necessary strategy for establishing the prioritization of interventions within the historical city.

From an economical point of view, the values can become the cornerstone of a sustainable development, by classifying the interventions according to their impact on residents in order to respond efficiently to local administration goals, cultural development and tourism.

For example, the ambiental value may require a less financial effort compared to other values. Even though in terms of quality it is not a priority in the overall picture of the city, an economical analysis may reveal the hierarchy for development directions in order to achieve a fast and positive impact on the city.

Case Study: The Historic Center of Alba Carolina Vauban Fortress, Alba Iulia, Romania

Historical Value

In the north of the city there were discovered traces of prehistoric settlements from the Neolithic period (5000-1900 BC) and within the city were found objects dating back to the Bronze Age (1700-1000 BC). Other evidence of human continuity settlements in the area were found along the Mures river at Teleac (a small village 4 km north-east of Alba Iulia). Here there is a fortified land wall stronghold (100 BC) that was most likely a center of Thracian tribes. (Netea Vasile) Later, here was founded a very important Dacian settlement called Tharmis (Apoulon) or Apullum (roman name)(115). Thereafter, the Romans established here a camp for the XIII Gemina Roman Legion (106-271) which had the role to oversee the gold exploitation and organize the gold transport to Rome.

(Fleser Gheorghe) Following the withdrawal of Aurelian, the city continued to exist, but in later years was attacked numerous times by migrating tribes. In this period the city was renamed Balgrad due to its white walls of the Roman fortress (1). The name origin is Slavic and some sources attest the city as Fehervar (in Hungarian) or Weissenburg (in German). Since the eleventh century the city was conquered by the Hungarians and Balgrad has become the Princely residence and location for Roman-Catholic Diocese (1177).

One of the most important events in the history of the city took place on the 1st of November 1599 when the first great union of Mihai Viteazul (Michael the Brave) for two years. At this point, the city became the symbol of freedom and unity of the Romanians in Transylvania, Moldavia and Romanian Country.

In the early eighteenth century (1715-1738), emperor Carol VI (Charles the VI – emperor of Holy Roman Empire from October 12, 1711 King of Hungary and Principe of Transylvania) put the cornerstone of Alba Carolina citadel, designed by the engineer Giovanni Morando Visconti (military architect, born in Italy that was designated to design citadel maps for Transylvanian cities -Alba Iulia, Sibiu, Timisoara, Cluj), being inspired by Vauban fortresses from France borders. The fortress was built not only to withstand Ottoman Empire invasion but also to create a power symbol of Habsburg Empire on the newly conquered territories.

Following the Great Union from 1918 that took place in Alba Iulia, the cultural heritage has been assigned to Romania. After the formation of Romania on 1st of December in 1918 the Orthodox Cathedral was built in memory of the first Great Union accomplished by Mihai Viteazul (Michael The Brave) in 1600 and the coronation of King Ferdinand I and Queen Mary as sovereigns of Romania (1922).

Memorial (Commemorative) Value

Intentional monuments were built in order to maintain the memory of an event or person. In the city of Alba Carolina there can be found six examples:

1. The obelisk of Horea Closca and Crisan 2. Michael the Brave statue, 3. Lossneau monument, 4. Custozza monument, 5. The Fork Hill monument, 6. the gallows scene from the Three Fortifications Route.

Unintentional monuments can be found across the entire historical center due to the events hosted (of national importance) or to the fact that they were the residence of many personalities throughout the course of history.

The Roman Catholic Church dating back to the eleventh century was built on the foundation of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Transylvania. In this church can be found the remains of John Hunyadi (Iancu de Hunedoara).

The National Union Museum holds a history of the place from ancient to modern times, pointing out events of national significance. The Union Hall is the room in which the union of the three countries was decided.

The Orthodox Church – the building symbolizes both the Great Union (and the coronation of King Ferdinand I and Queen Mary as sovereigns of Romania – 1922) and the patronage of Michael the Brave from Transylvania (1597).

Alba Carolina Citadel holds the mark of Habsburg Empire from Eastern Europe being the most important center back then from Transylvania. Now, the overall perception of the citadel is that of a space where national reunification took place.

Functional Value

The Alba Carolina citadel was built in order to stop the Turkish expansion in the Eastern part of Habsburg Empire. This purpose was never fulfilled due to the decline of Ottoman Empire right after its completion. However, the secondary purpose was accomplished – to highlight the power of Habsburg Empire in newly conquered territories.

The original function of The Union National Museum was as a pavilion for officers, and was changed to that of a museum in 1968. All the modifications were made only inside, the exterior of the building being the same up to now.

The construction of Princely Palace and Episcopal Residence began in the early thirteenth century and undergone many changes in the following years, until eighteenth century. Over time, these buildings received various functions: Episcopal palace, Princely Palace and Military barracks.

Biblioteca Bathyaneum is the former Church of Trinitarians (Monk of the Holy Trinity monastery order founded in XII century to free Christians from Muslims) and it was built between 1719-1738 in Baroc style. It kept the initial function for a short period of time. Later, it became warehouse and military hospital (1786-1792). The current function was assigned in 1798 when it became library and observatory at the initiative of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Transylvania Batthyany Ignace (1741-1798).

There are several other military buildings inside the historical center that can be converted into buildings that may receive a public function. By public functions is to be understood a better way of using these spaces that can improve cultural tourism or cultural activities in general.

Environmental Value

Geographically, the city of Alba Carolina is located on the second terrace of the Someș river, a strategic location given the fact that from here one can see the entire valley. On the west side of the city, the Metal Mountains are visible and, on the east side, there can be seen the entire Transilvanian plateau Erzgebirge and also the hills east Transilvanian plateau.

The first line of trenches was neglected until recent years. These areas were not visitable and between the ravelins and bastions could be found uncontrolled vegetation growth. In recent years, the city walls were restored and trenches are open to the public. Even though the route is very large and monotonous due to the lack of vegetation and excessive pavement, the uniqueness of this space is sustained by the decorative baroque sculptures applied on a military structure.

Undeveloped areas, such as the second row of citadel's trenches that surround the fortress walls and a couple of green areas like ravelines and adjacent spaces, could be the solution for the lack of green areas in the city. The Vauban citadel from Lille, France, by example is located in the middle of the central park and the fortifications are the background of promenades.

Volumetric Value

The overall perception of the historic center is only possible from aerial views due to the large size of the fortified walls (110 ha). The ensemble image appears to be a symmetrical and balanced composition, in which the interior of the fortress aligns to the Vauban style fortifications.

The urban silhouette should be defined by the historic centre and the new city spaces should align to the old ones because the citadel can be characterized as a city within a city. Even though the citadel is located on the highest hill in the area (Dealul Mare) it is not visible for the pedestrians from the new city until they reach the fortified walls' base. This rule applies to the north, east and south part of the walls but in the west, where the perception from the new city has almost vanished due to some interventions in the 20's. (A small park of trident shape was built by partially covering up the trenches).

Once arrived at the base of the wall, the citadel cannot be seen as a whole from eye level. The interior of the spaces can only be gradually perceived. Despite that, going through the interior space there is continuous and homogeneous perception because of the specific geometry kept over time. The interior space of the citadel is defined by three towers (the Unification Cathedrale tower, the bell tower and the St. Michael Church tower). The overall proportion of the volumes in space, and the building's specific decorations generate recognizable places.

Contextual Value

The morphology of the inner citadel is centered around the Custozza Park, recently transformed into a square. The orthogonale street tissue is mainly kept from the medieval age.

The buildings built along the main axis have different rhythms and accents, key elements being the Roman-Catholic and Orthodox churches towers. The Custozza Park and the north side of the citadel have a homogenous structure, where the buildings form a continuous line developed on the horizontal axis.

Seen from the outside, the citadel forms a symmetrical and balanced composition due to the massiveness of the walls, while to the inside the whole space is broken in parts. Inner spaces are defined by the alternation of major volumes and the rhythmized street alignment.

Urbanistic Value

The actual urban structure of the historic centre is the result of successive changes in urban tissue. The city has been modified in order to meet the need of the residents. A very important aspect is the social one and the succession of the population that settled here and lived with the existing population. There are three important phases: 1 – The Roman fort, 2 – Medieval fortification, 3 – Vauban citadel.

The Roman fort is situated on the city hill and it has a typical organization practiced by the Roman Empire. The fort is organized by two main perpendicular axes inscribed into a rectangular fortress, almost square.

The medieval fortification overlapped the Roman one, having the same boundaries, main axes and inner texture. In this period, the fortress was upgraded with two defensive towers on the southern side.

Vauban citadel (1715-1738) took over the existing plan of the medieval fortress. The only important change was the offset of the east-west axis and the six gates route. Due to the level difference, the east-west axis changed its direction between gate I and gate III creating a dynamic composition. Before reaching gate III, on the east-west axis, there is a multi-valent point from which it can be observed the whole façade of the IIIrd gate, the defence trenches, the city and the river Someş. Also, the importance of the place is amplified by the Horia, Cloşca and Crisan obelisque built in 1937 by architect E.Mihaltan and the sculptor Negrulea.

Strategic Value

The main sources of city's economy are the vineyards, production companies (carpets, shoes, porcelains, etc.).

Alba Iulia is located in the heart of Transylvania, in Apuseni Mountains, the county stands out through natural sights (Rosia Montana, Lake Oasa, numerous caves such as Huda lui Papara, Scarisoara Glacier, Coiba Mare - the largest cave from Romania, etc..) and architectural (Ramet and Afteia Monastery, the Royal Palace from Savarsin, the Haller Bethlen and Teleki Castle, the Fortress of Calnic, Aiud citadel, etc.).

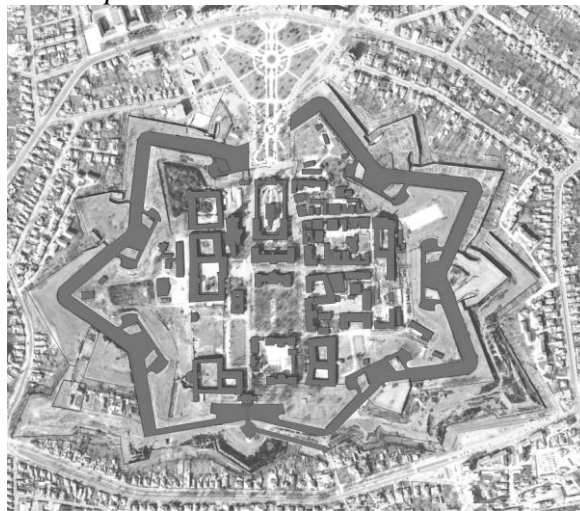
ALBA IULIA 78p	A. Roman Age - Middle Age / Industry	B. Middle Age / Tourism	C. Renaissance / Administration	D. Baroc / Education	E. Early XX century	F. Interwar period - Modernism	G. Postmodernism	H. Comunism
1. Historic value	●●	●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●	—	—
2. Memorial (Commemorial) value	●	●	●●●	●●●	●●●	—	—	—
3. Functional value	●●●	●●	●●	●●	●●●	—	—	—
4. Environmental value	●	●●	●	●● ●	●●	—	—	—
5. Volumetric Value	—	●	—	●● ●	●●	—	●	—
6. Contextual value	●	●●	●	●●●	●●	●●	—	—
7. Urbanistic value	●●	-	—	●●●	—	—	—	●
8. Strategic value	●	●●●	●●	●				
Total points	11	13	12	21	15	4	1	1

4A – Roman ruins;
4B – medieval fortress walls;
4C – inner courtyards;
4D – Vauban citadel Alba Carolina;
4E – XXth century interventions;
5B – Roman Catholic Church;
5D – Vauban citadel Alba Carolina;
5E – National Reunification Cathedral;
5G – Postmodern buildings;
6A – Roman camp;
6B – Medieval fortress;
6C – Historic center;
6D – Vauban citadel;
6E - Houses (Octavian Goga Street)
6F – Houses (Octavian Goga, Trandafirilor (Roses), and Teilor (Lime tree) Street);
7A – street network;
7D – Vauban citadel Alba Carolina;
7H – street network;

1A – Gemina Roman Legion camp;
1B – Roman Catholic Cathedral;
1C – Historical center;
1D – Vauban citadel, Apor Palace, Batthyaneum Library;
1E – National Reunification Cathedral, Teilor and Trandafirilor Street;
1F – Octavian Goga Street;
2A – Roman ruins;
2B – Medieval fortress ruins;
2C – First Union of Romanian Countries
2D – 1848 Horea, Closca and Crisan rebellion;
2E - 1918 Great Union;
3A – important center from northern part of Roman Empire;
3B – religious center;
3C – politicaly, a very important period;
3D – Eastern Austro-Hungarian Empire emblem;
3E – Orthodox Archdiocese of Alba Iulia and Roman Catholic Archdiocese;

From an administrative point of view, the city is also important at a national level because of the two Archiepiscopates from Romania (Orthodox and Catholic). It also hosts the University (December 1 1918), AISTEDA (private higher education institution) and the county branch of the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca. Alba Carolina citadel is by excellence a representative place of Transylvania and Romania due to the housed events throughout history and the particular structure of the historical center. Although the citadel has developed a lot in the last twenty years, new spaces are discovered and enhanced with small steps. The current image of the historical city could be described as a period of “transition” in the process of potential exploitation.

Alba Iulia city center map



Source: Google Earth

Conclusions

Sustainable development of the historic city and exploitation of its building fund is a long process which trains cultural, economical and political factors. The city needs a development strategy in order to enable a proper lecture of the historic center. Transylvanian cities hide a real architectural potential that needs to be conceived as “living” places by re-creating the link between contemporary people and lost/forgotten spaces.

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