Walled Cities & Open Societies: Managing Historic Walls in Urban World Heritage Properties
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Dubrovnik (Croatia)
Info sheet
1. City Background Information

The origins of Dubrovnik are linked to the fall of the Antique town of Epidaurum (modern-day Cavtat). However, the archaeological discovery of coins dating from the 4th to 3rd centuries BC in the historic centre of Dubrovnik testifies to the existence of inhabitation in this area also in the Hellenistic period.

The town got its Slavic name after the word for a forest (dubrava) which used to cover the slopes of the hill Srđ. The first settlement was constructed on the highest part of the peninsula, so that conquerors or robbers arriving by land or by sea may be spotted on time. This was a strategic position that enabled control over the passage of ships sailing along the eastern Adriatic routes. At the foot of this hill was a well-protected cove, providing a good anchorage place.

The Republic of Dubrovnik developed in time in such a surrounding, and lasted from 1458 until 1808, when Dubrovnik came under the rule of the Hapsburg Monarchy. Throughout the history, the freedom of Dubrovnik had been threatened many times. The last time, in the 1990s, during the Serbian aggression, when the walls regained once again their original defence function.

2. Basic description and brief history of the walls

The present-day girth of the Dubrovnik city walls was established in the 13th century. They were systematically improved until 1660, when the last tower at the southern part of the walls was erected.

The walls stretch over 1,940 metres, and consist of the following: the main city walls, sixteen towers, three forts, six bastions, two corner forts, three pre-walls, three moats, two barbican-towers, and a breakwater, and two city drawbridges. The walls are up to 25 metres high at places. The main city walls are 4-6 metres wide on the inland side, and 1.5 to 3 metres on the seaside.

Many known and unknown local and foreign builders contributed to their construction. However, most of them remained unknown. Among the famous ones, there are: Paskoje Miličević, Nikifor Ranjina, Marin Držić, Župan Bunić, Miho Hranjac, Juraj Dalmatinac (Georgius Mathei Dalmaticus, Giorgio Dalmata), Michelozzo Michelozzi of Florence, Onofrio and Simeon della Cava, Antonio Ferramolino of Bergamo, Giovanni of Siena, Bernardino of Parma, Markantonio Bettacci of Florence, Seporoso Mateucci of Fermo, and Giovanni Battista Zanchi of Pesaro.

The shape and design of the walls was determined by the need for defence, as well as by weaponry and war techniques of the time when they were constructed. The site was, also, selected so to allow for easy watching over the land and the sea.
In the mid-13th century, the Dubrovnik commune was a well-developed community, with organised city administration, and stable regulations and legislation. The statute of the city defined rules of behaviour in the city, the sanctions, as well as the strategy for building and expansion of the city walls.

The design and shape of the walls was being adapted to the needs of defence and warfare throughout the Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque periods. So, the most important changes happened in the 16th century with the occurrence of firearms. Dubrovnik was among the first to have supplied them. The fortification walls got strengthened and doubled, and the towers got partially filled with earth. The defence was moved from the top of the walls to the foot, because of powerful canons that required platforms.

The Dubrovnik city walls did not stand out among other European cities of that period, but they surely were impressive for their compactness and quality of stone walls which structure, position and shape remained almost intact until the present day.

3. Current functions and management/governance framework

Nowadays, the walls serve for tourism purposes. They are the main attraction of the city, and a magnet for many tourists. This was achieved by years of investing in the walls, and their systematic maintenance and remediation.

The care of the walls was entrusted to the Society of Friends of Dubrovnik Antiques, founded as a citizens’ association in 1952 with the purpose of preservation, care and promotion of rich and manifold heritage of the Dubrovnik area. For this purpose, the City signed a concession agreement with the Society, thus entrusting the Society with the care for the walls, and also giving the Society the right to their management. On annual basis, the Society collects income from entry tickets for the walls, which amounts to little more than 100,000,000.00 kuna.

According to laws and other regulation in force, the Society is obliged to give half of the income from the walls to the city, while the other half is spent on repairing the walls. The city is obliged, by law, to give half of the income from the walls to the Institute for Restoration of Dubrovnik, thus reinvesting the income from the walls to restoration of all other heritage inside the walls and contact zones.

The Institute for Restoration of Dubrovnik is a public institution. It was founded by the city of Dubrovnik (55%), the Republic of Croatia (35%), and the Dubrovnik-Neretva County (10%). The Institute was founded in 1979, and it looks after the monument heritage of the historic centre of Dubrovnik and wider.
The Dubrovnik area is marked on the seismic hazard map as an area of the highest possible risk, with earthquake intensity of 8-10 on the Mercalli scale. The Institute conducts researches which help in systematizing valuable data needed for the implementation of seismic repair. It played a very important role in repairing the entire historic centre damaged in the catastrophic earthquake of 1979. Also, it played an important role in repairing and reconstructing the historic centre after the destruction of the 1990-1992 War.

Today, and in addition to the remediation, conservation and reconstruction of the heritage, the Institute is entrusted also with an important task of developing the Management Plan for the Historic Centre and a number of studies and materials which serve as a background for the Management Plan.

4. Role of the walls with the regard to the OUV of the WH property and its management system

The "Old City of Dubrovnik" is under UNESCO protection, on the basis of being of outstanding universal value under the selection criteria (I), (III), and (IV). It was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage list in 1979.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CULTURAL HERITAGE UNDER UNESCO PROTECTION:

(I) "Masterpiece" / A masterpiece of human creative genius: Preserved elements of medieval fortified city structure (3)

(III) "Testimony" / Testimony to a cultural tradition: The interrelationship established between particular buildings and the entire complex

(IV) "Typology" / Types of buildings, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrate significant stages in human history: Almost all the stages of the development of the city have been preserved in its structure

(I) "Masterpiece" / A masterpiece of human creative genius: Preserved elements of medieval fortified city structure (3)

1 – The Old City of Dubrovnik is a well preserved example of a medieval planned city in the southern part of the Adriatic, a unique urban area with historic centre encircled by city walls, and located by the seashore, at the foot of the Mount Srđ.

2 – The Old City of Dubrovnik preserved important elements of medieval fortified city structure: the city walls, ground-plan layout of streets and squares, impressive public buildings, and most of the private residential buildings.

3 – The Old City of Dubrovnik is surrounded by monumental stone walls, 1,940 metres long. The defence system in the present form dates from the 13th century, and the fortifications were
completed in the 17th century. The system is composed of the main city walls with turrets, towers, forts and fortifications, a ditch, and the Kaše breakwater which protects the city harbour.

(III) "Testimony" / A testimony to a cultural tradition: The interrelationship established between particular buildings and the entire complex (6)

4 – The medieval legislative system resulted in precise stipulations about planning of urban development and construction, with high degree of rationalisation in the use of space of the Old City of Dubrovnik.

5 – A very advanced public utilities and health system of the Old City of Dubrovnik resulted in the construction of buildings that made the water supply and drainage system, in the construction of the Rupe granary, a complex of quarantine buildings, a building for medical services, a pharmacy, a hospital – hospice, and an orphanage.

6 – The urbanistic-architectonic complex of the Old City of Dubrovnik is made by an orthogonal street grid, formed by strictly regulated: street widths, spaces for residential and public places, type of construction material for buildings, streets and squares, and advanced public utilities infrastructure.

7 – Urban design composition of the Old City of Dubrovnik is determined by the street Placa, stretching from east to west of the city up to the Luža square, making the axis of the city and the focal point for its public life. Placa is flanked by residential buildings, and Luža and its southern extension are edged by administrative, business, sacral and municipal buildings.

8 – A recognisable architecture of the Old City of Dubrovnik is made by the construction of blocks of residential buildings in particular shapes.

9 – In case of the Old City of Dubrovnik, the area inside the city walls makes an integral entity with the area outside of the city walls, and includes the medieval industrial suburbs of Pile, the Lovrijenac fortress, the Lazareti complex of quarantine buildings, the Kaše breakwater, a ditch along the walls, and the Revelin Fortress and the island of Lokrum.

(IV) "Tipology" / Types of buildings, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrate significant stages in human history:

Almost all the stages of the development of the city have been preserved in its structure (7)

10 – Among the exceptional Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque monuments in the area inside the city walls of the Old City of Dubrovnik, the following stand out: the Rector’s Palace (11th century); the Franciscan monastery with the church (finished in the 14th century); the Dominican monastery; the Cathedral (renovated in 1667); the customs house (the Sponza palace), the city clock, the Arsenal, and a number of Baroque churches, like the church of St. Blaise (the patron saint of the city).
11 – The medieval industrial suburb Pile, as a planned construction, was built in the 15th century, to the west of the Old City of Dubrovnik.

12 – The Lovrijenac fortress, located on a cliff west of the Old City of Dubrovnik, in its present form dates back to the 15th and 16th centuries.

13 – Lazareti were constructed east of the Old City of Dubrovnik in the beginning of the 17th century, as a complex of buildings intended to provide quarantine for travellers and carriers as a protection from plague.

14 – The Kaše breakwater was constructed in the end of the 15th century, east of the Old City of Dubrovnik, to protect the harbour from south-eastern storms.

15 – The Revelin fortress is located east to the Old City of Dubrovnik, constructed in 1449, next to the city moat dug north by the city walls.

16 – The island of Lokrum is situated south-east of the Old City of Dubrovnik, and 500 metres far from it. A Benedictine abbey was founded on the island in 1023. There is a Gothic-Renaissance monastery from the late 15th century, and the Fort Royal constructed from the beginning of the 19th century to 1830.

5. Main challenges and opportunities concerning walls management

The walls are the main attraction, a magnet for tourists visiting Dubrovnik. They are a symbol of the city, and it is not possible to disperse tourists to some other attractive locations. The walls are the main profit generator.

However, being so over-visited, the city gets paralysed so that the pedestrian communication inside the historic centre is made impossible. The city with two narrow entry and exit gates to and from the city is additionally burdened with a large number of tourists mostly coming from big cruisers and staying very shortly in the city, only aiming to visit the walls and other monuments.

Because of the large number of tourists, the city is expanding its tourist offer with bars, restaurants and other service industries. The consequence of such a trend is a number of problems: with public utilities, infrastructural, demographic, sociological, safety issues, etc.

6. Main past, on-going or planned activities for enhancing the walls

At the moment, Dubrovnik is at the stage of developing the Management Plan for the Historic Centre and the Contact Zones, coordinated by the Institute for Restoration of Dubrovnik. In the
process, a number of activities were initiated: communication with civil society, various interest
groups, and experts, development of a number of studies, papers, researches, basis for GIS,
workshops, focus groups, problem identification, etc.

A number of databases are being created to make the Management Plan as operational and
high-quality as possible.

\[\text{\textsuperscript{1}}\] This document has been drafted by the Institute for the Restoration Dubrovnik. Authors are responsible for the choice and
the presentation of the facts contained in this paper and for the opinions expressed therein, which are not necessarily
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