



International
Conference on
Urban Planning



ICUP2020

PROCEEDINGS
Serbia, Niš, November 13, 2020

 ICUP2020





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FOREWORD

It is a great honour and privilege to present to you the Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Urban Planning - ICUP2020, which is taking place online in these uncertain times of coronavirus pandemic. This year's event is scheduled for November 12-13th, 2020 in Niš. The conference is organized for the third time by the Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture - University of Niš and Urban Planning Cluster, thus continuing the tradition of being a biennial manifestation of the University of Niš. We believe that the main conference goal is accomplished, since we have once again brought together scholars, researchers, students and professional from all over the world and from the fields of Urban Planning, Urban Design, Architecture, Civil Engineering and related fields.

Having successfully discussed a broad spectrum of planning, design and development issues during the First and the Second ICUP conference, it is now time to focus on the resilience of cities, while trying to shape urban landscape by promoting nature, cultural heritage, technologies and social equity. Topics that ICUP2020 is focusing on this year include, but are not limited to: Nature-based solutions in urban areas, Mitigation strategies for climate change, Cultural heritage in building urban identity, New approaches and concepts in preserving built heritage, New technologies and materials in construction, Social aspects in urban planning and design, Planning, design and development challenges in creating resilient communities, and Links between regulations, urban planning and architectural design.

After the review process, 30 conference papers from various study areas and diverse places in the world are discussed at the ICUP2020 conference. Contributing papers deal with highly topical resilience issues and therefore provide a valuable insight into contemporary urban theory and practice. The presentation of our eminent key-note speaker contributes to an interesting and successful conference, while the scientific contribution from the members of our international Scientific Program Committee guarantees a high quality Book of Proceedings that will inspire future research. I would therefore like to thank all of them, as well as teachers and associates engaged in the technical preparation of these Proceedings.

Given the importance of the topics elaborated at the conference and numerous questions that are raised here, ICUP conference will continue to explore topical issues in urban development for the benefit of our cities. I am pleased to invite all authors from the academic and research community to participate in future ICUP conferences.

See you all at ICUP2022!



Petar Mitkovic, PhD, Full professor
Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture, University of Nis
Chairman of the Scientific Program Committee

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Disclaimer

The contents of the papers presented in this publication are subject to review, but the authors are responsible for the originality and quality of their papers.



WHEN DISASTERS AND ERRONEOUS GOVERNMENTAL DECISIONS MEET IN HISTORICAL CENTRE: THE CASE OF THE OLD MARKETS OF THE LEBANESE TRIPOLI

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ABSTRACT

Tripoli of Lebanon is one of the poorest cities that overlook the Mediterranean Sea. It has a long history of more than 34 centuries, it is home to many historical sites and continues to be the second largest city having Mameluke architectural heritage after Cairo. The historical markets of this Islamic city are still in unceasing activity since the 13th century. Due to natural disasters, especially the flood of the river, local and regional wars and conflicts, and mostly, erroneous governmental planning, many historical buildings were lost and the social and economic fabric of the city was dissociated.

Referring to the historical characteristics, this research aims to study the features of the bustling Tripolitan souks and khans, the reasons behind their long existence and their survival until now. The paper will present a list of possible cultural and technical actions and policies to be taken by authorities and residents that affect the architectural heritage of the old city. This list is based on new planning methodologies and on old studies to overpass the current situation of accumulated deterioration, poverty and lack of opportunities.

Keywords: *traditional markets, Arab markets, Tripoli of Lebanon, historical monuments, Planning decisions*

1. INTRODUCTION

Tripoli of Lebanon is a city to the north of the country, on the eastern cost of the Mediterranean and it is the second biggest city in Lebanon after the capital Beirut. Its settlement went back to the time of the Phoenicians, more than 2700 years ago. However, the present city dates back to 1289 AD, when the Sultan Qalawun captured the city from the crusaders, and redeveloped it around the inland fortress of Raymond de Saint Gilles [1]. Tripoli is a proper creation of Mameluke; within their first fifty years of government, a big part of the core had already its clear features that will remain unchanged until recent days [2]. It became the second most important Mameluke city after Cairo in Egypt, and the third important city in the Levant after Damascus and Aleppo [3]. The souks and khans of Tripoli, where souk is the Arabic name for Market and khan is a caravanserai, are the main commercial pole of the city and they kept a continuous activity for more than 700 years with more than 1000 active shops distributed between long narrow alleys and khans [4].

The survival of such souks until now with all their historical features and their unceasing activities in an environment of deterioration and incessant conflicts and wars is a curious case worthy to shed light on. Previous studies [5] [6] studied one of the major problem of the city which is the urban planning of the Abu Ali river that divides the city into islets; other reports showed a single case of restoration of one market or khan [7]. The objective of this paper is to give a list of possible social, economic and technical actions and policies to be taken by authorities, organisations and residents to give back the historical centre of Tripoli its old beauty and glory. Before that, a brief description of the Mameluke organisation of the old core of the city will be

presented; the reasons behind the seven century of unstopped activities will be discussed. These reasons will be the base for the renovation and rehabilitation of these historical markets. Moreover, the main reasons of the deterioration, decay and demolishing of the souks will be listed with emphasis on natural disaster (the flood) and on urban governmental decisions.

2. TRIPOLI AND ITS 700 YEARS OLD MARKETS AND CARAVANSERAI

Buildings and souks in Tripoli form a single body; the relation with one another is the relation of veins and arteries to a living body. The biggest part of the old core was situated on the left side of the river, underneath the fortress built on a hill, surrounded by the two old zones: Al Nouri (Fig. 6) and Al Hadid (Fig. 7) which are the core of the old souks. To the right of the river, stands out Al Souaiqa and El Tebbaneh, mainly residential and a very poor zones.

The mameluke organisation of markets marks until now the old centre of the city. One would observe that specialization in goods was the regulating rule in markets as the names of the markets indicate [8]; goods and services that were important in Islam or deemed valuable to a Muslim - such as holy books, rosaries and perfumes - were positioned close to the mosque [9] [10]. The area of Al Nouri which has a superficies of around 0.8 km², is the heart of the historical centre [11]. The great mosque of Tripoli, or the Friday Mosque, known as Jami' Al Mansoury Al Kabir, is located in this zone, surrounded by souks of noble products such as Souk Al Sagha or Jewellers' Market which is a semi roofed market dedicated only to the manufacturing and selling of gold with around 120 gold shops [4], [12] (Fig.1 a); Souk Al 'Attareen or Perfumers' Market which is one of the longest old markets in the city, all its shops were dedicated to sell perfumes and medical herbs, but nowadays few perfumers are still working in this alley while the majority of the shops switched their function from selling perfumes to selling fruits, vegetables and food [13] (Fig.1 b), Khan Al Saboun or soaps caravanserai was built around 1480 AD in which, hand-made soap is still manufactured and sold here (Fig.1 c), Souk Al Ma'aref or Knowledge Market was full of libraries and bookshops, part of them were transformed into wardrobe shops. Perpendicular to the Jewellers' market, is located Souk Al Bazerken or Traders' market [14] which continues the Perfumers' markets until reaching Souk Al Nahhasin or Coppersmiths' market in zone Al Hadid. The devotion of the shops of this market was switched from fabrication of clothes to selling ready to wear fashion. Al Bazerken is continued by Souk AL 'Areed (the large Market) which is a wide opened alley of 9 to 12 m of width (from this big width comparing to old souks comes the name "Large") [15]. Souk Al 'Areed was formerly known Souk Al Kindarjiye or shoemakers' Market and now it is dedicated to sell ready to wear shoes. A branched alley of it is a roofed alley where some internal shops kept the traditional vocation of fixing shoes.



Figure 1: (a) Souk Al Sagha or Jewellers' Market, (b) Souk Al 'Attareen or Perfumers' Market, and (c) Khan Al Saboun or soaps caravanserai

Sources of illustrations:

<http://www.destinationlebanon.gov.lb/en/Home/Detail/23>, Accessed 29 September 2020
<http://www.sadaakkar.com/سوق-الخطارين-في-طرابلس-من-سوق-تاريخي-لل>, Accessed 29 September 2020
<https://www.sobeirut.com/souks-of-tripoli>, Accessed 29 September 2020

Al Hadid (Fig.4) is another area of the historical centre of Tripoli with many historical markets. It is not at the vicinity of the great mosque, hence, the products manufactured and sold here are less noble than the previous ones. The most notable markets of this zone are: Souk Al Nahhaseen or coppersmiths' market, Khan Al Khayyatin or tailors' caravanserai (Fig.2 a), Khan Al Masriyeen or Egyptian caravanserai, Birket Al Milleha where a small fountain stands in the middle of the markets, Souk L Haraj (Fig.2 b), etc. Souk L Haraj with its 2300 m² and its high vaulted ceiling of 8 m [16], is for some historians a "strange and undetermined structure" in the middle of the souks. It has a hybrid structure of a khan (caravanserai) and of a souk (market) [7], [2]. Now, a

coffee shop took the place of many of its old small shops. Many mosques are situated in Al Hadid Zone, the most famous two are AL Tawba and Al 'Attar Mosques.



Figure 2: (a) Khan Al Khayyat or Tailors' caravanserai, and (b) Souk L Haraj

Sources of illustrations:

<https://www.lebanoninapicture.com/pictures/khan-al-khayyat-in-the-old-downtown-of-tripoli-tripoli>, Accessed 29 September 2020
https://www.qantara-med.org/public/show_document.php?do_id=1044&lang=en, Accessed 29 September 2020

It is worth to mention that within all the old souks are spread a number of Madrasah or religious Islamic schools and public baths such as Hammam Izz El Din, better known as Turkish baths, even they were constructed many centuries before that the Ottoman had governed Lebanon since 1516 AD. Nowadays, a one-way car street passing through the coppersmiths' market separates Al Hadid and Al Nouri zones, and fortunately, it is the only non-pedestrian street in these pedestrian souks. The left and right banks of the river were connected by stone arches bridges destroyed by the flood of 1955 and never rebuilt again (Fig. 3 a, Fig. 4 a), but replaced by new concrete simple beam-bridges, not in harmony with the old aspect of the city. EL Tebbaneh, to the right side of the river, is dedicated for wholesale retail of different merchandise especially fruits and vegetables.

In summary, walking in the old markets of Tripoli resumes the experience of visiting a mature Islamic city that holds within its social fabric communities of Muslims and Christians that live together in bustling and narrow alleys and markets that branch from the Friday mosque and reach the citadel built on a strategic point [17].

3. THE CLIENTELE CONTINUITY AND PHYSICAL SURVIVAL OF TRIPOLI'S SOUKS

The study is referring to the physical survival of the souks as arrived to us after the declaration of the state of Great Lebanon in 1920. After this period, Tripoli has experienced a number of accelerated transformations that would undermine the integrity of its ancient fabric by opening new axes [18], the increment of its population by 10 times in 100 years due to the increase in economic activities that was tripled in 30 years [19] and many architectonical changes that went through the city implementing cheaply constructed composites of concrete, in disharmony with the features of the traditional buildings [20].

The clientele continuity of Tripoli's souks is correlated to many factors, especially the geographical location of the streets in the core of the historical down town of the city (Al Nouri and Al Hadid) that have a low density of population, but surrounded by the most populous area of the city (Table 1): Al Tal (87 068 people), AL Haddadin (77 581 people), El Tebbaneh (34 789 people), Al Souaiqa (14 231 people) [3]. Hence, the old markets compose undisputedly until now the commercial nucleus of the major residents of the city [11]. As well, the low prices of the merchandises in the souks of the city comparing to other places attract the neighbouring population that give Tripoli the nickname of 'Emm Al Faqir' or the mother of the poor. Hence, the souks have become an important place for low-income families [11], [9]. Being the biggest city in the north of Lebanon, the souks of Tripoli are not restricted to the residents of the city, they are welcoming customers from all social fabrics and from all over the country, especially the North Governorate [4]. Moreover, being specialized in one product or merchandise and standing as one of the rare places in Lebanon where it is possible to feel the old orient, the old pedestrian markets of Tripoli with traditional crafts, goods that are not present in the new commercial centres, foods, cheap products, religious facilities and the covered portions that protect pedestrians during winter and summer encouraged clients to visit and shop at the souks [9].

Even the presence of customers and traders keep the markets alive, the physical survival of the architectonical features of Tripoli's souks is not related only to the continuity of the clientele. For example, the capital, Beirut

kept its clientele and its position as the biggest commercial city in Lebanon, but many old markets were destroyed to give place to the new urbanisation which change dramatically and forever the shape of the city [21]. Many bad and good events made together convenient factors for the physical continuity of these souks. For instance, the loyalty of the people of Tripoli to their heritage and the Lebanese Civil war (1975 -1990) played a big role on passing to us a good part of the old core of the city. In the fiftieth of the twentieth century, in many countries of the Third-world, the concepts of celebrating highways as symbols of freedom and progress and exposing key monuments by stripping them of their urban context were consistent with Western planning ideologies [10]. Hence, the government in collaboration with the municipality planed an urbanisation plan based on destroying the old narrow streets while keeping the key monuments. As it will be mentioned later, the people stopped this project and refused this “innovative” planning. And during the era of the civil war and post-war, the Lebanese government struggled with economic issues and the priority of the reconstruction of deteriorated buildings and infrastructures especially in the capital [21], these facts closed the curtains on the pre-war plans. From the nineteenth, with the help of the Ministry of Culture, international funding from the World Bank, European Governments and other private and public donor agencies helped in the urban/ tourism regeneration of some historical souks [22]. For instance, Souk L Haraj was restored in 2005 with the cooperation of German Government [7]. Khan Al Khayateen was restored with the collaboration of the Spanish Government, Souk al 'Areed was restored by the local organisation of Al 'Azem Society [15] etc.

These are the major factors that contributed to the physical remaining of the souks along with many ramified and interconnected reasons related to the mechanical properties of the buildings and their resistance against natural factors, the protection of historical individual monuments by existing legislation [18] and many others.

4. THE FLOOD AND GOVERNMENTAL PLANS

Abu Ali River in Tripoli was the true maestro of the Tripolitan life, it was the heart of the new mameluke settlement although it disturbed the life of the citizens by its floods at least once every century. The first flood of the river after the Mameluke settlement was mentioned by Safadi, it took place in 1344 AD. The next big flood was in the beginning of the fifteenth century in 1407 AD when Ibn Hajar mentioned that the people of Tripoli had not seen anything like this, many buildings were destroyed and many people were killed. After almost one century, in 1503 AD, the flood of Tripoli river destroyed many houses and shops, similar to the flood of 1612 AD that affected Al-Tawbah Mosque; an historical inscription stills memorize the event of the renewal of the mosque after this big torrent. In 1749 AD, the river overflowed for three days and raised above the bridges about 12 cubits or 5 meters killing many people and destroying many houses. The flood of 1844 was not so different, because it destroyed many shops near the river and killed a number of crops and people. The last big flood was in December 1955 where more than 60 homes and 500 stores have been destroyed, 30 homes have collapsed, and the number of victims has exceeded 120 victims (Fig. 3 b, Fig. 4 b), part of the old Arches of the Prince has been destroyed, Al Souaiqa and Al Jadid bridges have been destroyed too (Fig. 3 a, Fig. 4 a) [23].



Figure 3: Abu Ali River before the flood of 1955 - (a) Jisr Al Jadid or new bridge, and (b) houses built on the two banks of the river

Sources of illustrations:

http://33shamy.blogspot.com/2016/08/blog-post_9.html?m=1, Accessed 29 September 2020
http://33shamy.blogspot.com/2016/08/blog-post_7.html, Accessed 29 September 2020

After this flood, by the end of 1968, the government decided to provide armour against floods for the following 1000 years. However, what it was left safe by the flood, was destroyed by this cultural massacre that harmed both the river and the city. Around 2,000 homes were demolished including historical madrasah and caravanserais: Khan al Jimel; Khan al Baroudi, Khan al Zait, Khan al Laymouni. Local strikes could save the historical mosque of Al Bourtasi that dated back to the beginning of the 14th century. Downstream river course

was straightened by an incongruous rectangular concrete channel with 5 m high vertical lateral retaining walls and surrounded by 24 m wide avenue at each side. The river's ecological functions were lost, wetlands and other habitats were dried up, the only recreational part of the residents that live nearby was destroyed, many athletic, cultural, social and religious activities that flourished around the river disappeared (Fig. 5) [5], [23].



Figure 4: Abu Ali River before the flood of 1955 - (a) the minaret of mosque Al Bertasi, and (b) Abu Ali River as a Lebanese post stamp

Sources of illustrations:

<http://www.trifayha.blogspot.com/2012/06/1.html?m=1>, Accessed 29 September 2020

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/484348134906593141/>, Accessed 29 September 2020

As all the above disastrous consequences were not enough, this project disconnected the neighbourhoods from each other, by splitting the city in two parts. Al Souaiqa and El Tebbaneh are totally disconnected from the rest of the city, except from two concrete bridges access. Large sections of the residential zone of Al-Souaiqa were demolished for this project. These disconnected zone becomes unsafe and the pole of the poorest people of the city who are using now the river as a garbage dump; moreover, vegetables and fruits vendors in El Tebbaneh district are squatting the public space along the river causing high traffic congestion and affecting the surrounding (Fig.5) [5], [6].



Figure 5: Abu Ali River after the project of 1968

Source of illustration:

<http://alfayhaalb.com/?p=20732>, Accessed 29 September 2020

The project of 1968 did not come from the void, it was a clear result of the triumph of the blind imitation of the modernization in the conflict between the conventional form of modern development and the urban fabrics of historic cities. For instance, in 1947, a master plan was developed by the French Planner Eglié following a Haussmanian type model of grand boulevards, roundabouts and open spaces [5]. The plan was intended to widen the new bridge or Jisr al-Jadid above Abu Ali River which was lined with shops, and for many reasons this widening was undesirable by conservationists, as the committee of UNESCO mentioned in its report of 1953 [19]. Unfortunately, the bridge was destroyed by the flood and then totally removed by the 1968 project. In 1964 a new master plan of the city has been proposed but was not applied because it did not meet the interests of the landowners and the political stakeholders. In 1971, the Lebanese Government decided on a Master Plan proposal which is very different from the 1964 Master Plan proposal. What are of interest in this master plan are the proposed interventions in the historic core [5]. Maybe the reason behind this plan was the presence of “zone of desperados” unreachable by the governmental armies because of the tiny pedestrian roads and the contiguous houses. The chronic deprivation that affected the city since the independence era and its permanent and deliberate marginalization by the state, led to a growing feeling of oppression, injustice and lack of justice that was pushing some of its people to disobey to draw the attention of state institutions to

them. These insurrections were translated into the events of 1969 -1972 in El- Tebbaneh and then in 1973 in what was known as the "Al Kaddour state" in the old core of the city until the Lebanese state eliminated this "phenomenon" in 1975. Meanwhile, the state, wearing a modern urban formula to bring light into modest and dilapidated homes, intended to conduct new urban planning for the old markets, and to construct wide streets [30]. The main reason aimed at eliminating the historical pedestrian twisted corridors, which prevented the security forces from arresting the wanted persons. Fortunately, only two souks (al Nahhasin or coppersmiths and al-Kendarjiyeh or shoemakers) were affected. The Tripolitans refused this project, they considered it a demolition of the city's memory. It was remarkable the strike of the people against the trucks who wanted to destroy the old pedestrian souks to keep only the "Main Monuments" [24].

5. OTHER PROBLEMS OF THE OLD CITY

Not only the floods and the governmental plans were the only problems of the city which changed its authentic face. The old city and surrounding neighbourhoods suffer from many different problems. The first of them is the high population density which reaches between 260 and 500 persons/hectare in the old city and Haddadin and raises dramatically in the poor area of El Tebbaneh to reach occasionally between 1000 and 1400 persons/hectare (Table 1) [3], [5].

Table 1: Number of people in the old core of Tripoli [3]

Location	Al Tal	Al Haddadin	Al Kobbe	El Tebbaneh	Al Souaiqa	Al Rimmaneh	Al Nouri	Al Zehrieh	Al Hadid
Population	87 068	77 581	91 076	34 879	14 231	2543	3773	8347	972

What makes the problem of high population worse, is the illiteracy where 8% of the population of the old city are illiterate, 35% of heads of economic units are illiterate and 55.2% did not exceed a primary education [5]. The high level of low education is correlated with poverty and high unemployment rate which impose two ways of living: first, encouraged by the Islamic law, many families depend on the donations by rich people which creates from religious point of view a balance between rich and poor people, but unfortunately it creates a state of passive dependency; second, the politicians and what they represent of public institutions, instead of helping the residents by changing their current situation in implementing economic and educational plans, they take advantage of this situation in order to attract new voters by paying them and as a consequence, they establish a relation of obligation and a mentality of corruption and bribery [5]. The absence of social and economic safety and the static depressed situation of no change, lead to a depressed micro-economy, lack of social services. As a consequence, the aesthetical and structural condition of private properties and monuments is declining over time without a chance to restore them in the near future. The historic city centre is suffering from both lack of public spaces and pedestrian and vehicular accessibility difficulties; for example, the environmental condition of the city is deteriorating; random and spontaneous concrete constructions, not in harmony with the long history of the centre, are rising here and there killing what it was the only recreational part of the city [11], [20]. The Lebanese civil war (1975-1990) had a hand in destroying some buildings and it changed the demographical tissue of the city and reduced or destroyed some important commercial activities [1]. Some local conflicts returned back in 2007 and 2014 and destroyed few markets and khans [15], the fact that declared Tripoli as a the "Lebanese Kandahar" or a city of eternal conflicts. These conflicts reduced the economic capacity of the residents and the touristic reputation.

To all the precedent reasons, the whole situation of the Lebanese Government with limited mean and few desires to regenerate feasible projects and pay attention outside the central capital marginalized more Tripoli [11], [3].

6. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

As it was mentioned in the UNESCO plan study of 1953, "the visitor has the same pleasure in Tripoli that he feels in wandering through the by-streets and *mercerie* of Venice or the old parts of Vienna, Paris or Florence" [19]. Hence, the old town of Tripoli has big potentials that can transform drastically the poorest city

on the Mediterranean to an attraction city emphasising its hidden beauty. As it was mentioned in the previous sections, this gem went under a lot of undesirable events and what it was a little work of restoration few decades ago [19], is becoming more and more complicated everyday as a result of the accumulation of deteriorations and destructive events.

For the rediscovering of this hidden and very-damaged tangible cultural centre, different, fast and responsive economic, social and technical actions should be taken by the governments, private and public organisations to satisfy the present and future necessities of the local residents involving them in the main decisions, “creatively absorb and interpret their needs” and respecting their quotidian habits and traditions [10], [25]. What emerges in the decay of the historic corpus is on one hand a technical problem that can be resolved at a professional level; and in the other hand is related to the desire of the correspondent authorities to take such decision.

The first step in improving the current situation of the bustling commercial centre of Tripoli is to estimate them. Estimation comes from the rediscovering of the hidden inner identity [10], [24] which means “peeling off the dead crusts accumulated over time around the kernel of life” by absorbing certain philosophies and life style that underestimate or refuse the own heritage, past and present, comparing them to alien “Idol” realities (“cultural inferiority complex”). The act of belief in this heritage and the intention of rediscovering it pave the ways to attract foreign investments [10]. However, in Third-World context, it is hard to convince people living in poor conditions of the importance of cultural heritage, they had a misconception that culture and economy are two parallel lines which do not meet. Culture is an impractical concept for them, but it can unleash financial benefits and side effects. Hence, boosting the economy and improving their living conditions are indispensable points and can be aligned with the cultural heritage development.

Presenting the importance of the historical conservation of the old souks relays on local experts, architects and engineers through organizing cultural events, courses and activities about the topic and pushing schools and cultural organisations in raising generations of citizens that appreciate the historical identity. It is far from logic to relay on foreign planners and architects who are well trained but they are not experienced in local habits and conditions to effectively produce sound policies and planning solutions [26]. However, local engineers and architects, with valuable knowledge on local characteristics, are not always adequately trained to translate their information into urban design and planning [26]. From here comes the importance of educating and training local brains on developing and applying modern methodologies with respect to the native identity without a blind copying of ready to use plans and strategies.

In terms of planning, restoration, demolishing and rebuilding, many concepts exist and may not all experts agree on one, but some criteria and rules must be followed such as the general guidelines of La Carta de Venezia and ICOMOS recommendations [7]. It should also be pointed out that old masons’ techniques are quite different than the abilities of the majority of the present ones [27]. Hence, the recruitment and training of skilled labour-workmen and craftsmen is a necessity for the purpose to do a careful restoration in harmony with the local style [19]. This necessity can be an additional opportunity for hiring local unemployed residents and teaching them traditional work of arts which have for long been neglected and then rediscovered by academic investigations of historians, architects [19] and some few existing masons that conserved such abilities [27]. Unfortunately, currently most of the traditional manufacturers switched the manufacturing operation by selling imported products. The consumerism trend of the society affected a lot the disappearance of local handcrafts. This problem can be overpassed by encouraging again the local productions, as in the case of Khan Al Saboun that has an international reputation [28]. One more idea to improve the souks is by implementing a plan to encourage responsive tourism in a way that the old souks do not rely totally on tourists, but to integrate them in an organized social and economic framework.

Regarding the technical points, many hard decisions should be applied to overcome the problems listed above:

- The first problem that should be resolved is to reconnect El Tebbaneh or the right bank of the river to the rest of the historic city with pedestrian bridges by demolishing the existing incoherent beam concrete bridges and rebuild stone bridges taking into account vehicles and pedestrians. Second, organise or relocate the market of the vegetables and fruits in El Tebbaneh district. A next ambitious step will be to rebuilt old-style restaurants, coffee shops and shops dedicated to the manufacturing and selling of traditional handcrafts along the bridges and some parts of the two banks of the river as the old city was developed.

- Transform the concrete channel of the river to an ecological corridor by removing the concrete walls and filling the bed of the river with gravel and then revitalizing some of the river's ecological functions. Studies of the vegetation and wildlife habitat, ecological and landscape approaches should be incorporated in the master plans. It is an essential point to give again the river its natural function instead of being a garbage dump.
- The key monuments, Khans, souks, Madrasah and baths should be rehabilitated at a first stage with the intention of obtaining a continuous commercial nucleus that reveals its authentic architectural features, similar to the work of restoration done on Souk L Haraj, the Great Mosque, Souk al Areed, etc [7], [15]. Some of the madrasahs could be restored to host social and cultural events. Far from the emphasis on one individual monument, a cohesive historical pole can attract more investments, clients and tourists [29].
- The second stage in the internal souks is to restore the houses, especially the finest and most neglected ones and turn them into hotels or boarding-houses.
- A third stage in restoring is to restore the residential zones adjacent to the central core, which are the hill above the citadel and the part of El Tebbaneh and Al Souaiqa to the right bank of the river. This step includes the restoration of the residential buildings to the original colours of the city which means white houses with green terraces [17] or red bricks, and not colourful houses, similar to tropical towns, which is far from the authentic identity of the city. The hill of Abu Samra that looks directly on the citadel needs an urgent planning. The existing high-rise concrete buildings of 12 stories dominate the panorama in a way that the citadel appears as a mediocre structure in comparison to them. The hill should be redeveloped as a public park, without buildings and planted by adequate vegetation and trees such citrons, berries which give back the city and the citadel is ancient splendour.

The ancient city of Tripoli was a work of art, with the right decisions, it could regain again its former beauty.

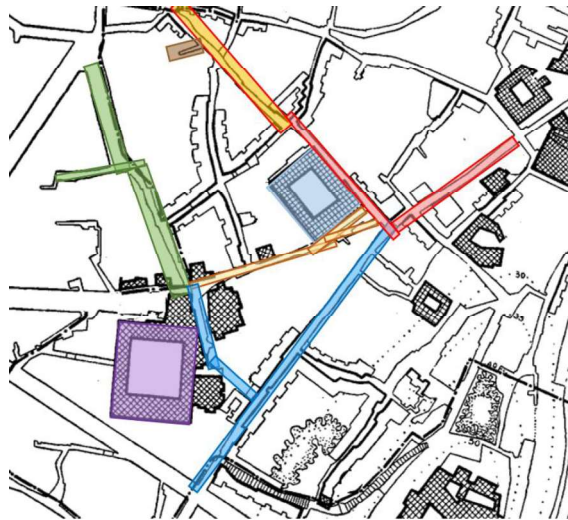


Figure 6: Al Nouri zone: The great Mosque, Souk Al Ma'aref, Souk Al Sagha, Souk Al 'Attareen, Khan Al Saboun, Souk AL Bazerken, Souk Al 'Areed, Souk Al Kindarjiye, Source [19]

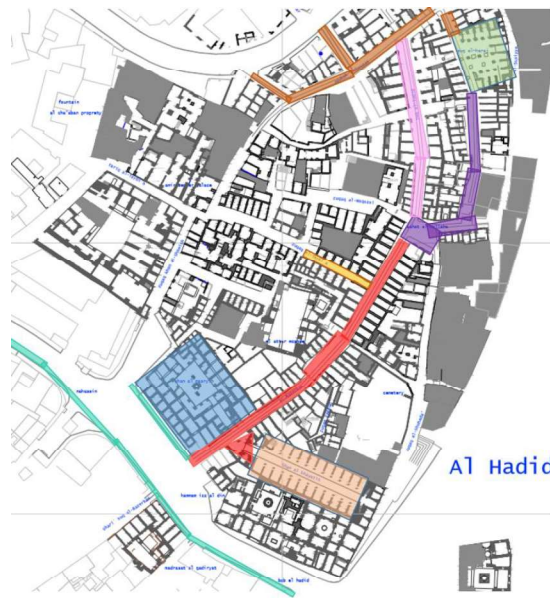


Figure 7: Al Hadid Zone: Souk Al Nahhaseen, Khan Al Masriyeen, Khan Al Khiyyatin, Souk Al Bazerken, Birket al Milleha, Souk L Haraj, Souk L Jdid, AL Terbee'a, Zoukak Tanbouzat, Source [7]

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