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**C E N T R O
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P R O S P E T T I V E**

G E N O V A

a cura di Roberto Bobbio e Stefano Francesco Musso

Roberto Bobbio, Stefano Francesco Musso (2020). *Historic Center. Problems and Perspectives. Genoa.* ANCSA, Gubbio.

Abstracts of the chapters

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Abstracts of the chapters¹

Introduction – Roberto Bobbio and Stefano F. Musso, pp. 13-16.

The introduction by Roberto Bobbio and Stefano Francesco Musso provides an overview of the socio-economic and urban evolution of Genoa's historic centre, highlighting the significant shifts in the city's development since the 1960s. The document outlines the major challenges and achievements in urban planning, industrial growth, and heritage preservation, focusing on the impact these factors have had on the historic core of Genoa.

In the late 1960s, Genoa appeared on track to reach a population of one million, with debates focusing on whether it should expand as an industrial city or become a hub of highly qualified services. The General Urban Plan of 1980 reflected both visions by preserving existing industrial areas while also promoting the tertiary sector. However, the industrial decline that followed in the subsequent decades, particularly the closure of large state-owned factories, led to a loss of employment and a rapid population decrease.

By the 1980s, Genoa was recognised as one of Italy's "shrinking cities". Despite this downturn, the city began to rediscover its vast architectural and urban heritage. The 1980 plan acknowledged the value of Genoa's built heritage, particularly in the historic centre, and began shifting from demolishing old neighbourhoods to preserving and recovering them.

The recovery of Genoa's historic centre has been a long and complex process, initiated in the late 20th century. This transformation involved restoring monuments, public spaces, and private buildings, often with significant public and private investments tied to international events such as the 1990 World Cup, the 1992 Columbus Celebrations, and the 2001 G8 Summit. These efforts have resulted in the revitalisation of key areas, particularly the UNESCO-listed *Palazzi dei Rolli* and public spaces such as the *Porto Antico*, redesigned by Renzo Piano.

Despite the successes, the authors note that some areas of the historic centre, which were revitalised in the past, are now experiencing renewed challenges of social segregation, physical decay, and abandonment. This regression highlights the need for continuous and adaptive management strategies that respond to the evolving urban and social landscape.

The chapter identifies several key areas that continue to pose challenges for Genoa's urban development, particularly regarding heritage conservation. For example, buildings like the *Hennebique Silos* near the old port and the *Albergo dei Poveri*—a monumental 17th-century structure—are in dire need of restoration and repurposing. These areas, although not located within the core of the historic centre, significantly influence the vitality of the old city.

Bobbio and Musso argue that Genoa must adopt a more prudent and culturally aware urban planning strategy, which balances heritage preservation with modern needs. They stress the importance of protecting the city's unique architectural and cultural heritage, ensuring that it serves as a living resource for the present and future rather than being exploited for short-term economic gain.

The introduction highlights the major phases of Genoa's urban and economic transformation, underscoring the challenges of preserving its historic core while fostering sustainable development. The authors call for a

¹ The abstracts in the English language were drafted by using AI tools and Google Translate tools only for the IX EAAE Conservation Network Workshop purposes to facilitate work group sessions and study visits to the historic centre of Genoa. It will therefore be forbidden to copy and reproduce the contents in any form for purposes outside the IX EAAE Conservation Network Workshop activities. Participants shall not refer to this content to support the contributions stemming from the IX EAAE Conservation Network Workshop activities. All citations shall be referred to the official content of each chapter as reported in the original publication "Roberto Bobbio, Stefano Francesco Musso (2020). *Centro storico. Problemi e prospettive. Genoa*. ANCSA, Gubbio".

renewed focus on adaptive urban management, emphasising that Genoa's future lies in maintaining the authenticity of its cultural heritage while ensuring its continued relevance and accessibility to both residents and visitors.

Chapter 1 – Roberto Bobbio, Genoa from the Historic Centre to the Historical Landscapes, from the City to the Citizens, pp. 17-26.

The chapter focuses on the historical and urban development of Genoa, with an emphasis on its historic centre and surrounding landscapes. It discusses the challenges faced by metropolitan cities like Genoa, particularly in maintaining a balance between urban growth, historical preservation, and identity formation. The text outlines the transformation of provinces into metropolitan cities, which resulted in a loss of historical continuity and democratic representation. The historic centres of many Italian cities, including Genoa, have become crucial elements for their recognition and revitalisation, especially during crises. Genoa is highlighted as a case study, demonstrating the importance of its historic centre and the potential of using its historical landscape as a unifying factor for development and integration.

The chapter refers to the European Landscape Convention of 2000, which defines the landscape as a shared perception by the population, incorporating environmental, social, physical, and identity aspects. It suggests that metropolitan cities like Genoa could leverage their historical landscapes to build shared visions and develop new political and territorial strategies. However, the historical landscape is complex and often difficult to recognise, making its protection and enhancement a challenging task.

The report on Genoa's historic centre presents both its past successes and current stagnation. The initial momentum for urban recovery, which yielded benefits for the entire city, has diminished due to a lack of financial resources and visionary leadership. The report emphasises the need for a new strategy that considers modern factors such as a broader concept of heritage, landscape dimension, and increased citizen involvement. It also stresses the role of the metropolitan city as a new political entity with planning authority. The text advocates for recognising and preserving Genoa's historical landscape as a way to foster cohesion and improve the quality of life. By doing so, the city could rediscover its historical solidarity, complementarity, and similarities between its urban and rural areas. The chapter concludes that the legacy of the past could serve as the foundation for new urban policies and drive further development.

In summary, the chapter highlights the challenges of urban recovery and development in Genoa, the potential role of its historical landscape in shaping a cohesive metropolitan identity, and the importance of strategic planning and citizen engagement in overcoming the current stagnation.

Chapter 2 – Roberto Bobbio and Chiara Vaccaro, For an Updated Topography of the Historic Centre of Genoa, pp. 27-48.

The chapter explores the complex historical and urban evolution of Genoa's historic centre. The study presents a series of maps and analyses aimed at offering an updated topographical understanding of this area, highlighting the interplay between geomorphological characteristics, long-term construction processes, and rapid transformations brought on by external events or deliberate interventions.

The authors discuss how Genoa's historic centre maintains distinctive urban features despite ongoing changes. They identify areas of continuity where historical forms and structures remain relatively unchanged alongside those that have undergone significant transformations in recent years. These observations underscore the dynamic and evolving nature of the city's topography.

Key focus areas include defining the boundaries of the historic centre, incorporating various urban units and landmarks such as the seventeenth-century Albergo dei Poveri and the Villetta di Negro, which are integral to the ancient city's fabric. The authors delineate how the city's urban layout is shaped by primary civic and

religious polarities, the medieval city's main axes, and the later Strade Nuove, constructed between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries.

The study also examines the expansion of Greater Genoa and the integration of historic rural and urban settlements that were absorbed into the city during the twentieth century. This includes the enduring presence of historical landscapes and fortifications, such as the "Mura Nuove" of the seventeenth century, that define Genoa's urban and territorial development.

The paper further explores Genoa's urban planning approach as defined in the 2015 Piano Urbanistico Comunale (PUC), emphasising areas designated for conservation due to their historical, architectural, and landscape significance. Additionally, the authors examine commercial, educational, and cultural activities within the historic centre, noting their significant role in shaping the city's vibrancy and identity. The chapter highlights the ongoing challenges of balancing modern development with the preservation of Genoa's rich historical fabric. It presents a detailed cartographic analysis that aids in understanding how Genoa's historic and modern urban elements coexist and evolve, thus offering insights into the broader process of managing historical urban landscapes in a contemporary metropolitan context.

Chapter 3 – Chiara Vaccaro, Demographic and Socio-Economic Investigations of the Historic Centre of Genoa, pp. 49-60.

The chapter by Chiara Vaccaro explores the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of Genoa's historic centre, using data primarily from ISTAT (Italian National Institute of Statistics) and the Municipality of Genoa. The analysis covers population trends, density, the presence of foreign residents, housing, and economic activities, offering a detailed picture of the current socio-economic landscape in this historically significant urban area.

Demographic Trends: The historic centre of Genoa has seen a significant population decline since the pre-World War II period, transitioning from a "city within a city" to one of Genoa's many neighbourhoods. However, since 2001, the trend has reversed, largely due to the urban recovery efforts that have positively impacted both the physical environment and socio-economic conditions. The study focuses on three primary neighbourhoods—Pré, Molo, and Maddalena—where the population dynamics reflect broader patterns of urban change.

Population Density: A comparative analysis of population density between Genoa's historic centre and other modern neighbourhoods, such as Albaro, La Foce, and Quezzi, reveals that the centre's density is on par with some residential areas. Nevertheless, historical congestion levels were much higher before the twentieth-century population decline. Certain parts of the historic centre, particularly around Via della Maddalena and areas within the old city walls, have experienced urban and social revitalisation, contributing to higher population density. Conversely, areas dominated by university buildings and museums exhibit lower population densities.

Foreign Residents: The foreign population in the historic centre is concentrated along Via Pré and near the old Jewish ghetto, areas that remain some of the most impoverished and degraded despite urban recovery efforts. The demographic composition of foreign residents in the historic centre differs from the rest of the city. While Genoa as a whole hosts many immigrants from Latin America and Eastern Europe, the historic centre attracts more residents from Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Housing: The analysis of housing in the historic centre shows a significant portion of unoccupied dwellings. This phenomenon is only partially due to the availability of housing stock; many units are unsuitable for modern habitation due to structural issues. Additionally, there is likely an unaccounted presence of undocumented rentals and spaces used for illicit activities.

Economic Activity: The economic activity within the historic centre is diverse, with notable contributions from retail trade, hospitality, cultural activities, and transportation. However, there is limited presence of industries

related to energy and construction. The study highlights the centre's continued role in providing services to private enterprises and its growing importance as a hub for cultural and tourism-related activities.

Finally, the chapter provides a comprehensive examination of the historic centre of Genoa, showcasing its evolving demographic and socio-economic landscape. The centre is characterised by both challenges, such as housing issues and the concentration of foreign residents in marginalised areas, and opportunities, particularly in the realms of urban revitalisation, cultural activities, and tourism development. This analysis serves as a foundation for further urban planning efforts aimed at balancing historical preservation with socio-economic growth.

Chapter 4 – Andrea T. Torre, Immigration and New Residents in the Historic Centre of Genoa, pp. 61-66.

The chapter by Andrea T. Torre examines the impact of immigration on Genoa's historic centre, tracing demographic shifts from the late 19th century to the present. The analysis explores how foreign residents, particularly from Africa and Asia, have shaped the socio-economic landscape of this area, which has traditionally been a focal point for new arrivals due to its proximity to the port and affordable housing options. Historical Population Trends: From the late 19th century to the mid-20th century, the population of Genoa's historic centre remained relatively stable, despite significant growth in the rest of the city. However, from 1951 to 1991, the population of the centre halved, primarily due to suburban expansion and industrial decline. The port of Genoa played a crucial role in this demographic shift, as the city's heavy industry was dismantled, leading to a rise in service-sector employment. This period coincided with the first waves of immigration, particularly from countries in the Global South.

The Role of Immigration: The chapter outlines the evolution of immigration in Genoa, beginning with arrivals from Iran in the 1970s and continuing with increasing numbers of immigrants from North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1980s and 1990s. During this time, Genoa's port and historic centre became central hubs for immigrants, as the area offered cheap accommodation and was well-connected to public transportation. Immigrants from Morocco, Tunisia, and Senegal, many of whom worked in street vending, found temporary or permanent housing in the old city's degraded buildings, often under exploitative conditions.

Population Dynamics: By the 1990s, immigrants constituted a significant portion of the historic centre's population, with a peak of over 68% of Genoa's foreign residents living in this area. However, this concentration began to decline as the city underwent urban regeneration, and immigrants increasingly moved to other neighbourhoods. By the 2000s, the historic centre had lost its role as the primary residential area for immigrants, with only 25.7% of the foreign population living there in 2000, a figure that dropped to 9.5% by 2014. This shift was driven by both the renovation of the historic centre and the growth of Genoa's Ecuadorian population, which spread into other districts.

Recent Developments: In recent years, the percentage of foreign residents in the historic centre has stabilised at around 10.8%, partly due to the establishment of refugee accommodation centres. Despite the decline in the overall immigrant population, the historic centre still attracts new arrivals, particularly single men from Senegal, Morocco, and Bangladesh. These groups continue to rely on the area's cheap housing and proximity to the port, although their migration trajectories are less oriented towards family reunification compared to other immigrant communities in the city.

The historic centre of Genoa has long been a point of entry for immigrants due to its location, affordable housing, and access to transportation. While the centre has lost its dominance as the main immigrant residential area in recent decades, it remains a visible and significant location for certain foreign communities. The presence of foreign residents in this area reflects broader trends in Genoa's urban and demographic evolution, particularly in response to industrial decline and urban regeneration.

Chapter 5 – Paolo Rosasco, Property Values and Real Estate Market in the Historic Centre of Genoa, pp. 67-76.

The chapter by Paolo Rosasco explores the dynamics of property values and the real estate market in the historic centre of Genoa. It focuses on how urban, social, and economic factors influence property prices and examines the effects of urban transformations in the area.

The quality of an urban area is determined by a combination of spatial, infrastructural, architectural, social, and cultural factors. In real estate, property value is significantly affected by these elements. In the historic centre of Genoa, external factors, such as the surrounding urban context, contribute to around 27.5% of the property value. These external characteristics include accessibility, social context, pollution levels, parking availability, green spaces, and the presence of shops and public services.

Urban Transformations: The historic centre of Genoa underwent significant changes following the Second World War. Isolated reconstruction efforts were undertaken in response to damage from bombing, but these were primarily private initiatives and not part of a comprehensive urban plan. As a result, the area experienced gradual decay throughout the 1950s and beyond, leading to the migration of long-time residents to newer peripheral neighbourhoods. The turning point came with the 1992 Columbus Celebrations, which spurred the largest urban renewal programme in Genoa since the war. The area saw an increase in tourism, new commercial activity, and a rise in property values. Between 1990 and 2006, property prices rose by 92.5%, driven by improvements in accessibility, public transport, and the creation of cultural and leisure facilities. Areas around the Molo and Sarzano saw the greatest increases, as these neighbourhoods became more attractive to young professionals and students due to proximity to the Architecture Faculty.

Real Estate Market Dynamics: The analysis focuses on two periods: 1990-2006, during which urban renewal projects boosted property prices, and 2006-2017, marked by a general decline in property values due to the global financial crisis. While property prices in Genoa's historic centre dropped by 22.5% during the latter period, this decline was less severe than in other parts of the city, where the average decrease was 37.5%.

The demand for properties has shifted, with new residents, particularly small families and young professionals, looking for larger units of 50-90 square metres, compared to the 40-70 square metres requested a decade earlier. Despite this, there remains a significant mismatch between demand and supply, especially regarding floor level, parking availability, and panoramic views, which are frequently requested but rarely available.

The chapter highlights the impact of urban renewal efforts on property values in the historic centre of Genoa. External factors, such as improvements in accessibility, public services, and social context, have played a significant role in the appreciation of property prices. However, the market remains constrained by the limited availability of properties that meet the evolving needs of residents. Further urban and social regeneration, particularly in areas like Pré and Maddalena, will be crucial for maintaining the area's value and attractiveness in the future.

In summary, the complex interplay between urban regeneration, social dynamics, and property values in Genoa's historic centre are explored, emphasising the need for continued investment and strategic planning to address both physical and social degradation.

Chapter 6: Andrea Vergano - Genoa: From the "Discovery" to the Planning of the Historic Centre, pp. 77-90.

The chapter examines the evolving cultural and planning approaches towards the historic centre of Genoa, focusing on the post-World War II period. It traces how attitudes towards urban preservation and redevelopment shifted over time, particularly in response to the challenges of managing a historically significant urban area.

Initial Post-War Attitudes: In the immediate post-war period, the management of Genoa's historic centre was influenced by modernisation priorities, with a focus on improving circulation, sanitation, and aesthetics. The early urban plans of the 1950s treated the old city with ambiguity, acknowledging its historical value but often justifying drastic interventions such as demolitions and thinning of entire neighbourhoods deemed unhealthy or irrecoverable. These attitudes were reflected in Genoa's 1956 master plan, which considered parts of the medieval city as areas to be redeveloped.

Shifting Cultural Perspectives: By the late 1950s, a growing awareness of the historical value of the ancient city led to a significant shift in planning philosophy. This was marked by the adoption of conservation-focused approaches, as seen in the 1960 "Carta di Gubbio". The concept of "conservative restoration" replaced earlier ideas of radical transformation, advocating for the preservation and enhancement of the historic urban fabric. However, the lack of immediate planning interventions allowed for the passive preservation of many medieval structures, despite physical and social decay.

Early Recovery Efforts: The first comprehensive studies aimed at rehabilitating the historic centre were initiated in the late 1950s. Led by urban planner Giovanni Romano, these efforts focused on preserving the medieval core while addressing health and safety concerns. Although these studies marked the beginning of a more conservationist approach, their scope remained limited, and much of the historic centre continued to suffer from neglect and depopulation, exacerbated by suburban expansion.

Major Urban Interventions: The 1980s and 1990s saw significant urban interventions in the historic centre, spurred by the introduction of Italy's recovery plans (Piani di Recupero) and the 1992 Columbus Celebrations. These events led to substantial investment in the area, including the redevelopment of the old port (Porto Antico) and the construction of new cultural and public facilities, such as the Genoa Aquarium. Renowned architects like Renzo Piano were involved in transforming the waterfront, while projects in neglected areas like Pré attempted to address the challenges of urban decay.

The 2000 Urban Plan: The 2000 Urban Plan marked a turning point in Genoa's approach to managing its historic centre. This plan introduced a more integrated method of recovery, combining public and private investments and focusing on specific strategic areas requiring complex interventions. It also sought to improve public accessibility by enhancing transport links and developing new public services. However, despite these efforts, pockets of social and physical degradation persisted, particularly in the city's inner areas, where the effects of urban renewal were less visible.

The chapter concludes that Genoa's recovery of its historic centre represents a notable example of urban revitalisation, albeit with ongoing challenges. The city's approach has successfully blended conservation with modernisation, but the uneven distribution of recovery efforts has resulted in a contrast between revitalised areas and those still facing neglect. The text highlights the need for continued, holistic planning to address these disparities and ensure the sustainable development of the historic centre.

In summary, the evolution of Genoa's approach to its historic centre reflects broader trends in urban planning, where initial modernisation efforts gave way to conservation and careful rehabilitation. While significant progress has been made, the complexities of managing such a diverse and historically rich area continue to pose challenges.

Chapter 7: Silvia Capurro - New Tools in the Recovery of Genoa's Historic Centre, pp. 91-98.

The chapter by Silvia Capurro examines the evolution of the tools and governance strategies used in the recovery of Genoa's historic centre from the 1990s onwards. The analysis highlights the shift from traditional urban planning approaches towards more integrated and collaborative governance methods that focus on coordinated actions across public and private sectors to promote both material and cultural revitalisation of the city.

Urban Recovery Initiatives and Major Events: The recovery of Genoa's historic centre began with the 1992 Columbus Celebrations and was further strengthened by funding for the G8 Summit (2001) and Genoa's

designation as the European Capital of Culture (2004). These events provided substantial public resources that the city administration leveraged effectively, coordinating efforts between public entities and private stakeholders to address the socio-economic decline following the industrial disinvestments of the 1980s.

The process of recovery was characterised by a focus on the city's waterfront, with Renzo Piano being entrusted with designing a master plan for the 1992 International Expo. This led to significant transformations in the old port area and parts of the historic centre, including the neighbourhood of Pré, which had long been associated with social and physical decay. Similarly, Renzo Piano's work on the Molo neighbourhood and the Mandraccio area laid the groundwork for the recovery of the Porto Antico (Old Port).

Integrated Governance and Local Projects: In addition to these high-profile interventions, smaller-scale projects contributed to the widespread recovery of the historic centre. These included the renovation of public spaces and infrastructure, such as lighting, drainage systems, and urban waste management. These efforts helped restore the area's aesthetic appeal and encouraged private property owners to invest in the renovation and maintenance of their buildings, supported by public funding through integrated redevelopment programmes.

The governance strategy for Genoa's urban recovery was formalised through the new Municipal Urban Plan (Piano Urbanistico Comunale) introduced in the 1990s. This plan represented a departure from traditional planning approaches by simplifying regulations for intervention, eliminating the need for elaborate recovery plans, and allowing for more direct actions to be taken. The urban recovery was based on coordinated actions between architectural, urbanistic, social, and economic stakeholders, following the "Urban Project" approach promoted by the city's urban planning councillor, Bruno Gabrielli.

Challenges and Continued Efforts: Despite the initial success, the recovery process encountered challenges in the following years due to reduced public funding and the impacts of natural disasters, such as flooding. This led to the fragmentation of governance, as public resources were redirected to other priorities, and localised recovery efforts, such as the redevelopment of the Maddalena neighbourhood, lost momentum.

However, the city capitalised on its cultural heritage to boost tourism, particularly through the promotion of the UNESCO-listed Rolli Palaces, which became a major tourist attraction after extensive restoration during the 1990s and 2000s. The annual Rolli Days, in which these palaces are opened to the public, have attracted increasing numbers of visitors and helped position Genoa's historic centre as a cultural and tourism hub.

The chapter concludes that the recovery of Genoa's historic centre, while initially driven by significant public investment and international events, has become increasingly reliant on the promotion of its cultural assets, such as the Rolli Palaces. The success of these efforts demonstrates the importance of integrating cultural promotion with urban recovery strategies. However, the historic centre still faces challenges, particularly in areas that have not benefited from major redevelopment projects. The chapter advocates for continued, active involvement of local stakeholders and a multidisciplinary approach to ensure the sustainable development of Genoa's historic core.

Chapter 8: Andrea Pasetti - Perspectives for the Historic Centres of the Metropolitan City of Genoa, pp. 99-106.

The contribution by Andrea Pasetti discusses the current and future perspectives of the historic centres within the Metropolitan City of Genoa. The analysis explores the evolving relationship between urban centres and surrounding rural areas, emphasising the importance of reconnecting these historic networks, particularly in the context of sustainable metropolitan development.

Pasetti begins by outlining the historical relationship between major urban centres and smaller, rural communities, particularly in Italy and Europe. Traditionally, these relationships were essential for the exchange of goods and resources, with market spaces often located near city gates. However, the intense urbanisation of the last two centuries disrupted these connections, leading to sprawling developments that

filled previously open spaces. Despite this, traces of the historic networks remain visible and continue to shape the unique relational quality of European metropolitan areas.

In the Italian context, the 2014 law (Law 56/2014) established metropolitan cities and tasked them with rebuilding the connections between major urban centres and smaller towns. The law identifies the strategic goals of metropolitan development, which include fostering sustainable urban growth and managing integrated services and infrastructure across the territory. However, the integration of historic centres, both large and small, into these plans has been largely overlooked in official discussions and documents.

Challenges and Strategic Goals for Genoa: The chapter highlights the challenges involved in revitalising and networking the numerous historic centres within the Genoa metropolitan area. The Metropolitan City of Genoa has identified 43 urban historic areas and 145 rural and fractional nuclei, each of which is recognised for its unique historical value. However, limited financial resources and competing priorities have made it difficult to implement comprehensive strategies for their preservation and enhancement.

The first Strategic Plan for the Metropolitan City of Genoa, approved in 2017, acknowledges the need to “valorise the existing built heritage” but does not offer concrete steps for integrating the historic centres into a cohesive urban system. Pasetti argues that a coordinated effort is needed to transform these fragmented centres into an organic metropolitan network, which could provide new services, attract residents, and boost tourism.

The chapter examines two municipalities—Ronco Scrivia and Sestri Levante—that are currently developing their own Municipal Urban Plans (PUC). Both plans demonstrate a growing awareness of the importance of historic centres in shaping local identity and enhancing the quality of life. In Ronco Scrivia, a participatory planning process has resulted in a project that prioritises the preservation and regeneration of historic and rural nuclei, while also discouraging urban expansion. Similarly, in Sestri Levante, the focus is on revitalising historic areas as part of a broader strategy to promote sustainable tourism and social cohesion.

In both cases, the municipalities recognise that the revitalisation of historic centres is not just about preserving architectural heritage, but also about fostering stronger community ties and enhancing the attractiveness of these areas for new residents and visitors.

Pasetti concludes by emphasising the need for a more coordinated approach to managing the historic centres of the Genoa metropolitan area. He argues that the creation of an integrated network of historic centres could increase the region's attractiveness and provide more qualified urban spaces for residents and tourists alike. This approach would require targeted investments in mobility services, infrastructure, and public spaces, as well as a reconsideration of how public funds are allocated.

Overall, the revitalisation of Genoa's historic centres and rural nuclei represents a realistic and necessary goal for the future development of the metropolitan area. This effort must be supported by both cultural and operational tools to ensure that Genoa can fully leverage its historical assets for sustainable growth.

Chapter 9: Stefano F. Musso - Conservation and Restoration in the Historic Centre of Genoa, pp. 107-116.

The chapter by Stefano Francesco Musso provides an in-depth analysis of the conservation and restoration efforts in Genoa's historic centre from the 1960s to the present day. It examines the historical context, the challenges faced in urban development, and the evolution of restoration practices in the city.

Genoa's rich and complex history is reflected in its urban landscape. The city, once a powerful republic in the Mediterranean, has undergone various transformations throughout its history. These include periods of economic prosperity driven by port trade, followed by industrial decline in the post-war era. The city's historic centre, one of the largest and most densely populated in the world, suffered significant depopulation and physical degradation during the industrial boom of the mid-20th century. This period saw widespread suburban expansion, leading to the neglect of the city's historic core.

In the 1960s and 1970s, there was a growing awareness of the need to preserve Genoa's cultural and architectural heritage. However, this period was also marked by conflicting urban policies, including the demolition of significant areas in the historic centre, such as the Piccapietra and Via Madre di Dio districts. These demolitions reflected the city's desire for modernisation, which often came at the expense of its historical fabric.

The 1980s marked a turning point in Genoa's approach to urban restoration. The city began to implement more structured policies for the conservation of its historic buildings and public spaces. One of the key initiatives was the Studio Organico di Insieme (SOI), which aimed to rehabilitate several degraded neighbourhoods within the historic centre. The restoration of the Pré neighbourhood, led by architect Giancarlo De Carlo, was a prominent example of these efforts. However, the implementation of these projects was slow, and the results often fell short of initial expectations.

During the same period, there was a broader cultural shift towards the restoration of architectural heritage across Italy, driven by both social and economic factors. The magazine *Recuperare* became an important platform for discussing the restoration of historic buildings as an alternative to new construction. Genoa, in particular, became a hub for debates on the recovery of historic urban landscapes.

Notable Restoration Projects: The 1990s and early 2000s saw several significant restoration projects in Genoa, many of which were tied to major international events such as the 1992 Columbus Celebrations and the 2001 G8 Summit. These events brought substantial public funding and attention to the city's architectural heritage. One of the most emblematic projects was the restoration of the facades of the Palazzo San Giorgio, where the renowned restorer Pinin Brambilla Barcilon revived the building's lost 16th-century painted decorations. The restoration of painted facades became a major focus in Genoa, with numerous buildings in the historic centre undergoing conservation work. This included the Palazzi dei Rolli, a group of noble residences that were recognised as UNESCO World Heritage Sites in 2011. These efforts helped to re-establish Genoa's identity as a city with a rich cultural and artistic heritage.

Challenges and Future Prospects: Despite these successes, the restoration of Genoa's historic centre has faced ongoing challenges. Many areas remain underdeveloped or neglected, and some restoration projects have been criticised for prioritising aesthetics over historical authenticity. Additionally, the social and economic revitalisation of the historic centre has been uneven, with certain neighbourhoods continuing to struggle with issues such as gentrification, immigration, and illegal activities.

Musso concludes by reflecting on the need for a more comprehensive and thoughtful approach to restoration. He emphasises that future restoration efforts must balance the preservation of historical memory with the demands of contemporary urban life. By doing so, Genoa can continue to evolve as a living, dynamic city that respects its past while embracing its future.

In summary, the chapter provides a detailed account of Genoa's restoration efforts, highlighting both the achievements and the challenges faced in preserving the city's historic centre. The analysis underscores the importance of a multidisciplinary approach to restoration, one that integrates cultural, social, and economic considerations into urban planning.

Chapter 10: Giovanna Franco - Postgraduate Education for Heritage Conservation in Genoa, pp. 117-126.

The chapter by Giovanna Franco examines the postgraduate training programmes offered in Genoa for the conservation and restoration of architectural and landscape heritage. It focuses on the development and educational role of the Scuola di Specializzazione in Beni Architettonici e del Paesaggio (School of Specialisation in Architectural and Landscape Heritage) at the University of Genoa.

Given the vast and rich cultural heritage of Italy, Europe, and the world, there is a continuous demand for highly skilled professionals to manage complex restoration and conservation projects. The Scuola di

Specializzazione in Genoa was founded in 1994, inspired by key figures such as Edoardo Benvenuto, Bruno Gabrielli, Gianni V. Galliani, Tiziano Mannoni, and Ennio Poleggi. The school provides advanced education in the fields of restoration, active heritage protection, and the planned conservation of ancient and modern architectural heritage.

Surrounded by one of Europe's largest historic centres, the school annually attracts students from across Italy and abroad, offering them a unique environment for academic and practical training. Collaborations with local cultural and governmental institutions, such as the Ligurian Regional Secretariat for Cultural and Landscape Heritage and the Superintendency of Archaeology, Fine Arts, and Landscape, further strengthen the connection between the school and the professional field. Students have the opportunity to engage in practical activities directly related to conservation, working alongside professionals and experts in the field. The curriculum is designed to provide students with a comprehensive set of skills, blending theoretical knowledge with hands-on experience. The programme spans two years, during which students work on detailed studies of historical buildings and monuments, many of which are located in the historic centre of Genoa. The first year focuses on analytical studies, including structural and material analyses, and the second year involves the development of detailed conservation and restoration proposals.

Throughout the course, students gain expertise in various diagnostic techniques, both traditional and innovative. These include non-destructive methods for assessing the physical condition of buildings, structural analysis, and the use of advanced technologies such as Building Information Modelling (BIM) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to manage heritage data. The school also places a strong emphasis on sustainability, with students learning to balance heritage conservation with environmental concerns, including energy efficiency and resource management.

The school has played a significant role in various restoration projects in Genoa, contributing to the preservation of key historical sites. Recent projects include studies and restoration efforts at notable sites such as the Albergo dei Poveri, the Palazzo Belimbau, and the Villa del Principe Doria. These projects provide students with invaluable experience in real-world heritage conservation, allowing them to apply their theoretical knowledge to complex, large-scale restoration efforts.

One significant project involves the Albergo dei Poveri, a monumental 17th-century complex. The school's research and restoration efforts have uncovered new insights into the building's construction history and addressed urgent conservation needs, particularly in its roofing structures. Another example is the ongoing work at Palazzo Belimbau, a 17th-century palace, where students have contributed to the analysis and restoration of frescoes by Lazzaro Tavarone. These activities not only enhance the students' learning experience but also contribute valuable research to the wider field of heritage conservation.

The Scuola di Specializzazione in Genoa plays a crucial role in preparing professionals for the complex challenges of heritage conservation. By combining rigorous academic training with hands-on experience, the programme equips students with the skills needed to manage heritage conservation projects from diagnosis through to execution. The school's integration with local and international institutions ensures that students are well-prepared to contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage in Italy and beyond.

Chapter 11: Mauro Maspero - Protection and Safety: The Adaptation of Historic University Buildings in Genoa to Modern Regulations, pp. 127-134.

The chapter by Mauro Maspero focuses on the adaptation of the historic buildings of the University of Genoa to modern safety and fire prevention regulations. The analysis emphasises the challenges of preserving the architectural and artistic heritage of these buildings while ensuring their compliance with contemporary safety standards.

The University of Genoa is notable for its numerous historic buildings located in the city's historic centre, many of which are of significant architectural and cultural importance. Among the most prominent is the former Jesuit College on Via Balbi, known as Balbi 5, which houses the Rectorate and administrative offices.

Nearby, other university-owned buildings, such as Palazzo Balbi-Cattaneo, Palazzo Senarega, and Palazzo Raggio, are part of the Department of Antiquities, Philosophy, and History. Additionally, the university owns Palazzo Serra and Palazzo Belimbau, which host the Department of Modern Languages and administrative offices, respectively.

Another key building is the Albergo dei Poveri, a large structure with important historical value that has been recently restored to accommodate the Department of Political Sciences and provide facilities for students, including classrooms and a library.

One of the central challenges in adapting these buildings to modern use lies in balancing safety requirements with the need to preserve their historic features. Many of these structures are subject to architectural protection, making it difficult to implement standard safety measures without compromising their integrity. For example, historic buildings require modifications to meet fire safety standards, including ensuring structural stability, limiting fire and smoke propagation, and providing adequate escape routes for occupants. To address these concerns, the university has undertaken various restoration and safety adaptation projects, with particular attention to fire safety. One example is the fire safety study conducted for the Albergo dei Poveri, focusing on the library's high fire risk due to its open shelving system. The project used advanced modelling techniques to simulate fire scenarios, allowing the identification of effective containment and evacuation measures that would minimise damage to both the building and its occupants.

The adaptation of Genoa's historic university buildings is guided by various national regulations, including the 1993 European directive on building safety and the 2015 Fire Prevention Code. These regulations aim to ensure that buildings can withstand predictable loads and maintain structural integrity during emergencies, particularly fires. In the case of historic buildings, specific performance-based approaches are used to assess and address risks, allowing for tailored solutions that respect the buildings' historical character.

In some instances, derogations from standard safety rules are necessary, especially when full compliance would require significant alterations to protected structures. For example, fire safety measures often rely on compartmentalisation—creating zones within a building to contain fire and smoke. However, implementing such measures in historic buildings can be challenging without affecting their architectural integrity.

The University of Genoa has been proactive in addressing the safety and preservation of its historic buildings, using a combination of modern engineering techniques and regulatory compliance strategies. By employing fire safety engineering (FSE) and performance-based solutions, the university has been able to balance the preservation of architectural heritage with the need to ensure the safety of its occupants.

Looking forward, the university aims to continue this work by adopting new technologies and methodologies that will allow for the further safeguarding of these valuable historic assets. Through careful planning and collaboration with heritage and safety authorities, the university's historic buildings can continue to serve as functional, safe spaces for students and staff, while preserving their cultural significance.

This analysis highlights the complexities of adapting historic structures to meet modern safety standards, underscoring the need for innovative approaches that respect both the functional and cultural roles of these buildings.

Chapter 12: Maria Giovanna Figoli - City and Performance in Genoa: The Role of Historic Theatres in Urban Regeneration, pp. 135-140

The chapter by Maria Giovanna Figoli examines the relationship between historic theatres and urban regeneration in Genoa. It focuses on the cultural and social roles of theatres throughout history and highlights their significance in shaping the city's development, particularly in the revitalisation of neglected urban areas. Theatre has always been a key cultural and social institution, influencing the relationships within cities and with the outside world. In ancient Greece, theatres were located near the Acropolis, symbolising a connection between nature and society, while Roman theatres were central elements of public and religious life, often integrated into urban plans like the Forum. Following the fall of the Roman Empire, theatre's influence

diminished, with the Church taking over public representations, using them for educational purposes. Theatres later emerged in private spaces, such as aristocratic palaces, with performances aimed at privileged, educated audiences.

By the late 16th century, public theatres began to appear, reflecting the social and political shifts of the time, including the rise of the bourgeoisie. These theatres were not only venues for performances but also symbols of social stratification, with their architecture reflecting the divisions between different social classes. In many cities, theatres became focal points for urban development, helping to define the character of new districts. Theatres in Genoa's Urban Development: In Genoa, the history of theatres dates back to the early 1600s, with the establishment of the city's first permanent theatre, Teatro Falcone, which played a significant role in shaping the urban environment. Located on Via Balbi, Teatro Falcone transformed the street into an important urban axis, promoting both cultural and commercial activity. Similarly, Teatro Sant'Agostino, built in the early 1700s in an area destroyed by naval bombardments, helped revitalise the neighbourhood of Sarzano. The theatre became a catalyst for urban regeneration, bringing new life to a previously derelict area.

Throughout the 19th century, as Genoa expanded, new theatres such as the Politeama and Paganini emerged as central features of new residential districts. These theatres reflected the architectural norms of the Neoclassical style and served as cultural hubs for the city's growing bourgeoisie. Their presence helped consolidate the image of these districts as important components of Genoa's urban fabric.

The aftermath of World War II saw the destruction and abandonment of many of Genoa's theatres. The famous Carlo Felice Opera House, for instance, was heavily damaged by bombing and was not reconstructed until 1991. Its reopening was a significant event in the city's cultural life, reinvigorating Piazza De Ferrari, which had lost much of its vibrancy. The theatre continues to serve as a vital venue for social and cultural events, playing a key role in connecting Genoa's historic centre with its more modern areas.

Similarly, the revival of the Teatro Gustavo Modena in Sampierdarena, an industrial district facing socio-economic decline, has become an example of how theatres can contribute to the cultural and social regeneration of struggling neighbourhoods. The theatre's restoration and reopening in 1997 provided a much-needed boost to the area, fostering cultural activities and drawing residents and visitors back to the district.

Challenges for Historic Theatres: While Genoa's historic theatres have played crucial roles in the city's development and regeneration, they face ongoing challenges. Many of these theatres, especially those outside the city centre, struggle with limited visibility and inadequate infrastructure. As cinema and television have grown in popularity, smaller theatres have faced closure or repurposing, as seen in the transformation of many cinemas along Via XX Settembre into commercial spaces.

The chapter stresses the importance of supporting historic theatres by providing them with the necessary spaces and visibility to fulfil their cultural roles. By doing so, Genoa can continue to harness the power of its theatres in promoting urban regeneration and fostering cultural vitality.

Historic theatres in Genoa have long been integral to the city's cultural and urban identity, playing significant roles in revitalising and shaping its districts. Figoli calls for ongoing support for these institutions, arguing that they remain essential to Genoa's cultural heritage and urban development. With the right support and visibility, these theatres can continue to serve as powerful agents of regeneration and social cohesion within the city.

Chapter 13: Mario Calbi - Participation and Self-Management of Public Spaces in the Historic Centre of Genoa, pp. 141-150.

The chapter by Mario Calbi focuses on the themes of participation and self-management of public spaces within Genoa's historic centre, particularly during the 2012-2016 municipal cycle (Giunta Doria). The analysis addresses how public involvement was perceived and the expectations it generated, exploring both the successes and challenges encountered during this period.

Participation was a central theme in the electoral campaign that led to the 2012 victory of the Doria administration. The term “participation” has been used in various ways, sometimes masking political manipulation or unfulfilled promises. However, in this context, it referred to ordinary citizens voluntarily taking part in public initiatives without any institutional or professional mandates. The primary aim of these participatory efforts was to improve the city's liveability and promote inclusivity and social tolerance. This participation reflects a broader ideological backdrop, invoking themes like direct versus delegated democracy, governance versus government, and horizontal and vertical subsidiarity. These ideas support the transfer of power from the few to the many, allowing citizens to take ownership of public matters. One of the key factors driving this push for participation was the growing complexity of urban management. The breakdown of traditional intermediaries—such as political parties, unions, and religious institutions—has made it harder for citizens to communicate their needs and concerns to governmental bodies. This has led to a growing disconnect between the public and those in charge, resulting in a lack of trust and collaboration in managing public spaces. Moreover, emergencies like floods and the refugee crisis have often taken precedence over long-term projects and shared decision-making. The participation movement was seen as a potential solution to this disconnect, offering a synergy between the administration and citizens rich in ideas and hopes. There were also fond memories of successful participation experiences from the 1970s, particularly in areas such as social services, education, and culture. These memories fuelled the desire to replicate and expand those successes. During the Doria administration, there was significant pressure from citizen groups and organisations for a new era of public participation. Organisations like “Genova Bene Comune” and the “Oltre il Giardino” circle called for the adoption of governance models that aligned with progressive experiences in cities like Milan and Naples. A notable proposal was the adoption of the Labsus model, based on the principle of subsidiarity between active citizenship and institutions, as outlined in Article 118 of the Italian Constitution. This principle was operationalised through a series of rules that aimed to regulate the shared management of common goods, both material and immaterial. A dedicated office within the municipality developed a proposal for a regulatory framework that was discussed with various stakeholders, including municipal sectors and citizen associations. By mid-term, the administration had appointed the Deputy Mayor to lead the participatory process, which culminated in the approval of a formal regulation by the municipal council. Despite the progress made, several criticisms emerged regarding the participatory process. Some feared that citizens were not being engaged in critical decision-making processes and were instead being mobilised to manage minor tasks, such as maintaining public gardens. Others argued that participation could become a way to replace municipal employees and eliminate potential new jobs. Nevertheless, the chapter emphasises that the goal was to foster a sense of ownership among citizens while encouraging the public administration to serve active citizenship. The participatory process led to the creation of local networks and initiatives, although the slow pace of implementation and the eventual change in local government in 2017 disrupted the momentum. Nonetheless, the chapter highlights the importance of these efforts as a foundation for future attempts to foster greater public participation in managing public spaces. The chapter underscores the potential of citizen participation in improving the management and use of public spaces in Genoa's historic centre. Despite the challenges and limitations, the efforts made during the Doria administration set the stage for future collaborations between citizens and local government. It also highlights the need for continued commitment to shared governance and the involvement of local communities in shaping the future of public spaces.

Chapter 14: Agostino Petrillo and Sebastiano Benasso – Cancelled Genoa, pp. 151-158.

The chapter, authored by Agostino Petrillo and Sebastiano Benasso, examines the socio-spatial transformations in Genoa's historic centre, focusing on the installation of gates, fences, and barriers over

recent decades. These changes are analysed in the context of broader urban security policies, particularly following the 2001 G8 summit in Genoa. The text delves into how these measures have reshaped public spaces, contributing to social exclusion and a fragmented urban environment.

The Context of Gating and Urban Security: The chapter opens by discussing the symbolic and physical impact of the security measures introduced during the 2001 G8 summit, where Genoa's historic centre was divided into red and yellow zones. These security zones were justified as necessary for preventing unrest and safeguarding the city, yet the authors argue that many of the barriers and gates installed during that period were intended to remain permanently. These barriers not only served to control protests but also became part of a broader urban strategy aimed at managing public spaces and reinforcing social hierarchies within the city.

This "culture of fencing", however, did not begin with the G8 summit. It had already taken root in Genoa during the 1980s and 1990s when the city centre became a hub for drug trafficking and related criminal activities. Certain political forces advocated for the demolition of parts of the historic centre to prevent illegal activities, with some even suggesting that half of the old city should be destroyed to curtail crime. This period marked the beginning of an era in which gates and fences were used as tools for controlling urban spaces and addressing social issues.

Fragmentation and Social Inequality: The installation of gates and barriers has fragmented Genoa's historic centre, disrupting the continuity of its urban fabric. The authors describe how this process has contributed to a socio-spatial hierarchy, reinforcing distinctions between areas of the city. Neighbourhoods that once maintained a degree of social and spatial cohesion have become divided, with certain areas being designated as "service districts" for the city's bourgeoisie. This has not only led to the exclusion of marginalised communities but also cemented the unequal distribution of power and resources across the city.

The phenomenon of fencing in Genoa is contrasted with similar urban developments in cities like Florence and Venice, where security measures rely more on surveillance systems than on physical barriers. In Genoa, however, the gates have become ubiquitous, closing off public spaces and impeding traditional pedestrian routes. The authors highlight how these barriers have been normalised, with various types of gates, from permanent structures to retractable barriers, becoming a common feature of the cityscape.

Incomplete Gentrification: The chapter also addresses the issue of gentrification in Genoa's historic centre. Unlike in other cities where gentrification has led to the displacement of long-term residents and the influx of wealthy elites, the process in Genoa has been inconsistent and fragmented. Public interventions since the 1990s, particularly those linked to major events like the 1992 Expo, have laid the groundwork for urban renewal, but private investments have been limited and sporadic. As a result, gentrification in Genoa has occurred in isolated pockets, creating a patchwork of renewal rather than a comprehensive transformation of the city centre.

Furthermore, Genoa lacks the "creative class" that has driven gentrification in other cities. Due to brain drain and the migration of creative professionals to Milan and Turin, the city has not experienced the same level of cultural or economic revitalisation. Instead, Genoa's historic centre has witnessed a bricolage of speculative developments and inconsistent urban policies.

Petrillo and Benasso conclude by reflecting on the long-term impact of the barriers and gates that have proliferated in Genoa's historic centre. They argue that these measures have not only physically fragmented the city but also symbolically diminished its rich cultural heritage. The "cancelled" spaces of Genoa represent a loss of urban vitality, where the gating of public areas has stifled the social and spatial diversity that once characterised the city. The authors call for a re-evaluation of these policies, advocating for the removal of barriers and the restoration of the city's historic continuity.

In summary, the chapter offers a critical examination of how security measures and urban policies have transformed Genoa's historic centre, contributing to social exclusion and spatial fragmentation. The

installation of gates and barriers has reshaped the city, creating new challenges for urban cohesion and the preservation of its historical identity.

Chapter 15: Giampiero Lombardini - The Historic Centre of Genoa: Problems and Prospects, pp. 159-182.

The chapter by Giampiero Lombardini provides a critical reflection on the current state of Genoa's historic centre, analysing its socio-economic, cultural, and urban challenges. The analysis draws from the insights of several prominent figures in the fields of architecture, urban planning, and history, offering a multifaceted perspective on the issues and future directions for the area.

Expansion of the Concept of Historic Centres: The traditional understanding of a historic centre, which used to refer only to the medieval and early modern city, has expanded over recent decades. In the case of Genoa, the concept now includes urban areas built during the 19th and early 20th centuries. This broadening of the definition recognises the historical value of later urban developments, though it complicates efforts to maintain a cohesive and unified approach to urban management and conservation.

Perception and Identity: The chapter explores how Genoa's historic centre is perceived by its inhabitants and external observers. While the area is historically and architecturally significant, it has long been seen by many locals as a marginalised part of the city. The negative perceptions stem partly from its role as a hub for immigration and lower-income residents. This has created an identity of "non-lived heritage", where the historic centre is recognised for its cultural value but not integrated into the daily lives of the broader Genoese population.

Urban Challenges and Decline: The historic centre faces significant challenges related to urban decay, depopulation, and socio-economic decline. Several areas, such as Pré and Maddalena, have been particularly affected by the outmigration of long-time residents and the subsequent deterioration of public and private spaces. While urban regeneration projects have been implemented in certain areas, these have not always succeeded in addressing the deeper social issues. For example, in Pré, despite physical improvements, the loss of a stable residential base has undermined the long-term sustainability of

Successes and Failures in Urban Regeneration: The chapter highlights both successful and failed regeneration efforts in Genoa's historic centre. Successful projects include the restoration of the Sarzano area, which now houses the University of Architecture, and the Vigne area, where resident involvement was integral to the preservation of the local social fabric. On the other hand, the intervention in Pré is cited as an example where physical improvements did not lead to social revitalisation. This contrast underscores the importance of integrating social policies with urban redevelopment to ensure long-term success.

The Role of Public and Private Investment: Public funding has historically been crucial for regeneration efforts in the historic centre, but the decline in public resources has hindered further progress in recent years. The chapter stresses the need for continued public-private partnerships to sustain revitalisation efforts. It also points to the need for innovative financing mechanisms, including potential European funding, to support future projects.

The Future of Genoa's Historic Centre: Looking forward, the chapter calls for a more comprehensive and integrated approach to managing the historic centre. This includes balancing the preservation of its architectural heritage with the needs of current and future residents. The authors advocate for policies that enhance public spaces, provide essential services, and ensure the area remains attractive to both residents and visitors. There is also a need to address the broader demographic and economic challenges facing Genoa, as these have a direct impact on the viability of the historic centre.

In conclusion, the chapter offers a sobering assessment of the challenges facing Genoa's historic centre while also highlighting the potential for future revitalisation. The key to success lies in coordinated efforts that blend cultural preservation with social and economic regeneration.