Aritz Díez Oronoz, Imanol Iparraguirre Barbero

Manuel Manzano-Monís in Hondarribia (1959-1974): Reconstruction of a Historic Walled Town

Manuel Manzano-Monís en Fuenterrabía (1959-1974): La reconstrucción de una ciudad histórica amurallada

Manuel Manzano-Monís em Hondarribia (1959-1974): A reconstrução de uma cidade histórica fortificada

Keywords | Palabras clave | Palavras chave

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Abstract | Resumen | Resumo

The work of the architect Manuel Manzano-Monís in the reconstruction of the walled town of Hondarribia is widely recognized for the square he designed, but his contribution was more extensive, reaching well beyond the rebuilding of uninhabited areas. He created spaces of remarkable harmony and beauty while also identifying the value of places previously overlooked. He also showed insight into the role of traditional craftsmanship in preserving the material integrity of architecture at a time when construction was becoming industrialized. Many of this town's most attractive and lively squares, streets, and corners bear his subtle imprint, for in just over a decade he transformed the declining historic center by combining a rigorous understanding of its urban history with a careful integration of restoration and new construction, giving renewed significance to its dilapidated fabric. This article analyzes Manzano-Monís's work in Hondarribia, discussing the broader vision underlying his work and surveying both what was ultimately built and what remained unrealized.

La labor del arquitecto Manuel Manzano-Monís en la reconstrucción del recinto amurallado de Fuenterrabía es ampliamente reconocida por la plaza que proyectó, pero su contribución fue mucho más extensa y trascendió con creces la reconstrucción de las áreas deshabitadas. Creó espacios de notable armonía y belleza, al tiempo que supo reconocer el valor de lugares hasta entonces desatendidos. Mostró además una especial sensibilidad hacia el papel de los oficios tradicionales en la conservación de la integridad material de la arquitectura, en un momento en que la construcción avanzaba hacia su industrialización. Muchas de las plazas, las calles y los rincones más atractivos y animados de la ciudad llevan su discreta impronta. En poco más de una década, transformó un centro histórico en declive mediante la combinación de un conocimiento riguroso de

su historia urbana con una cuidadosa integración de proyectos de restauración y de nueva construcción, y devolvió así su significado a un tejido urbano deteriorado. Este artículo analiza la obra de Manzano-Monís en Fuenterrabía, aborda la visión más amplia que sustentó su trabajo y examina tanto aquello que finalmente llegó a construirse como los proyectos que quedaron sin realizar.

O trabalho do arquiteto Manuel Manzano-Monís na reconstrução da cidade fortificada de Hondarribia é amplamente reconhecido devido à praça que concebeu, mas a sua contribuição foi mais abrangente, indo muito além da reconstrução de áreas desabitadas. Criou espaços de notável harmonia e beleza, realçando também o valor de locais anteriormente ignorados. Revelou ainda uma visão inspirada sobre o papel do artesanato tradicional na preservação da integridade material da arquitetura, numa época em que a construção se estava a tornar industrializada. Muitas das praças, ruas e recantos mais atraentes e animados desta cidade ostentam a sua marca subtil, pois, em pouco mais de uma década, transformou o centro histórico em declínio, combinando uma compreensão rigorosa da sua história urbana com uma integração cuidadosa da restauração e da nova construção, conferindo um significado renovado ao seu tecido urbano degradado. Este artigo analisa o trabalho de Manzano-Monís em Hondarribia, discutindo a visão mais ampla subjacente à sua obra e examinando tanto o que acabou por ser construído como o que ficou por concretizar.

Manuel Manzano-Monís's contribution to Hondarribia in the Basque Country is chiefly associated with the creation of a new square in the historic walled town, yet his role in the reconstruction of the old quarter went much further. Between 1959 and 1974 he planned and directed virtually all the works undertaken in the walled precinct, restoring much of the extant urban fabric and projecting the redevelopment of dilapidated areas. To give an idea of the scale of his work, the spaces and buildings restored or rebuilt by Manzano-Monís over just a decade and a half accounted for a quarter of the total available area in the walled precinct and almost half of the area already occupied.[1]

His work in rebuilding the historic town center earned him the first Philippe Rotthier European Architecture Prize (1982) and this accolade certainly contributed to the project's critical acclaim, particularly at international level. This stemmed from a visit by Léon Krier and Maurice Culot with a group of architects from the San Sebastián School of Architecture, who introduced them to Manzano-Monís's work.[2] His project was first covered in *Archives d'architecture moderne* (Barey 1982) and has been studied in detail by Ana Azpiri, to whom we owe much of the context expounded here concerning twentieth-century urbanism and architecture in Hondarribia.[3]

Despite this recognition, the Hondarribia project has been diversely appraised. On the one hand, it has been praised for its success in regenerating the fabric of the walled town, creating new spaces of undeniable harmony and architectural quality which remain among the favored spots of both townspeople and visitors. On the other hand, the project has been criticized for its antagonism toward the axioms of contemporary architecture, which are moreover challenged by its very success. At local level, the exceptional nature of the regeneration is contrasted with memories of administrative abuses during its execution (Barey 1982: 38).

Our aim is to analyze the scope of Manzano-Monís's urbanism and architecture in the old town of Hondarribia based on a study of the streets and squares that he designed and rebuilt and an analysis of the ample documentation preserved in the Hondarribia municipal archive, largely unpublished. We seek to show the architect's broader vision through his various built projects as well as those not built but captured on paper.

Background

Hondarribia is located on the Cantabrian coast on a hill overlooking the mouth of the river Bidasoa, whose waters mark the line at which the Iberian Peninsula meets the rest of Europe. This strategic position made it suited for fortification and by the sixteenth century it had become a key site in the border defenses of the Kingdom of Castile. During this period of military significance, the town was enclosed within fortified walls (Fig. 1). The inhabited area was concentrated on the south side of the hill, with a regular layout of parallel streets along the slope, indicating its medieval origins (Arizaga 1978). Outside the walls a humble fishermen's quarter coeval with town stretched around the bay (Díez Oronoz et.al. 2024).



Figure 1: View of Hondarribia from the Marqués de Heliche Atlas. To the left of the walled town is the fishermen's quarter (Ferrarys 1655)

But by the twentieth century, the walled town had fallen into disrepair and near-abandon following its loss of value as a defensive stronghold as of the late eighteenth century, along with the havoc wreaked by sieges during the wars of the Quadruple Alliance (1719) and of the Convention (1794).[4] This state of neglect persisted through the early twentieth century, when the town council prioritized development outside the walls over conservation of the old town (Susperregui 1996: 152). The creation of new neighborhoods around the fishermen's quarter contributed to the depopulation of the center and made this outer district a focus of population growth with the emerging tourist industry (Azpiri 2003).

As the town grew around that district, the walled precinct languished. A plan for the renovation of the old town drawn up by Gutiérrez Soto and Cánovas del Castillo in 1927 remained largely on paper as the walled quarter declined (Azpiri 2003: 110–115). The only notable development of this period was the restoration by Pedro Muguruza, municipal architect until his death in 1952, of Plaza del Obispo (1943) and a few other sites (Susperregui 1996: 45–57).

This inaction had to do with the opposition of the council, embodied in the figure of Mayor Sagarzazu, to any external oversight of planning. Thus the council blocked the designation of the walled town as a heritage site, which would have driven redevelopment and introduced a legal framework for oversight of future projects, thereby removing the mayor's control over development (Azpiri 2003: 167-168; and Susperregui 1996: 152).[5]

The departure of Mayor Sagarzazu in 1958 and the death of Pedro Muguruza paved the way for the advent of Manuel Manzano-Monís. He took over from Muguruza in drafting the municipal development plan and was appointed technical adviser in 1958.[6] The new council's planning policy included a regeneration of the historic center, and Manzano-Monís was asked to draw up a plan for the walled precinct.[7]

He showed from the start that he had a distinct vision for the town, devising a planning framework that enabled him to dominate its architectural scene for almost fifteen years. Beyond his virtues as an architect, he showed skill in turning the administrative machinery established by Mayor Sagarzazu to his advantage, thereby taking control over old-town developments from the council, which eventually complained of his monopoly to the provincial authority and had him removed.[8]

His early work, such as a 1959 development plan for the civic center, was as commissioned by the council. But the transgression of his guidelines in early projects processed before his plan's adoption, along with a council's proposal to build a sports complex by the walls led him to appeal to higher authorities and to draft a framework to harmonize criteria and bring any development in the walled center under his aegis (Barey 1982: 34). Beyond any personal interests that may have been involved, it seems clear that Manzano-Monís's determination to oversee all the work done in the center was motivated by concerns about the council's poor practices and the risk of his plan being implemented arbitrarily, undermining his unified vision for the town.

His new legal framework was surprisingly adopted by the local authorities, hitherto reluctant to accept interference. The application for heritage site status for the walled town, submitted by the council itself in 1962, stipulated that all work should be overseen by the Directorate-General for Fine Arts of Spain, of which Manzano-Monís was part. The application was accompanied by a development plan for the old town precisely defining guidelines for the whole historic center.[9] This was followed by several special development plans, such as for the realignment and restoration of Calle Pampinot (1962),[10] for the restoration of facades on Calle Carnicería (1966), and for a new square (1968),[11] in which the architect defined not only overall guidelines but also composition and details. Under these plans, he had housing built which, as mentioned, occupied almost the same built area as existed prior to his tenure.[12]

It is not hard to imagine the displeasure of architects, developers, and local authorities who found themselves obliged to hire Manzano-Monís for any project within the historic center. Yet his control over development was decisive in ensuring that reconstruction was carried out coherently and harmoniously (Azpiri 2003:183).



Figure 2: Early twentieth-century view of the high street, still relatively well preserved in Manzano-Monís's time (Deutsches Dokumentationszentrum für Kunstgeschichte)

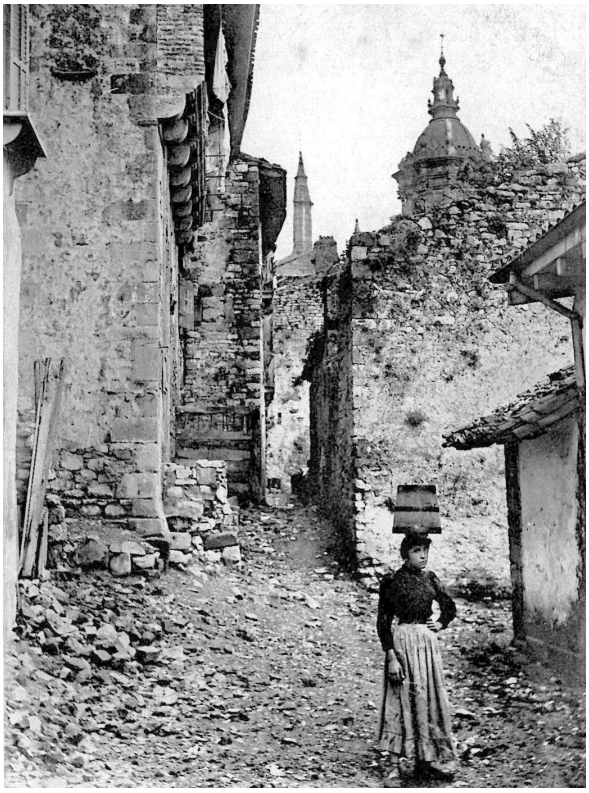


Figure 3: Alley with ruined houses on the west side of the walled town in the early twentieth century (Deutsches Dokumentationszentrum für Kunstgeschichte)

The Manzano-Monís Masterplan

Manzano-Monís's masterplan was preceded by an exhaustive historical and architectural study, essential to understanding the plan and its approach. He visited archives and museums, studied historic army maps, and scoured libraries, print collections and antique stores with the aim of gathering together historical and graphic information (Barey 1982: 34).[13] He analyzed the town's architecture and made detailed surveys of streets and buildings, producing extensive graphic and planimetric documentation in which the existing fabric was interwoven with outlines of lost elements recovered through his research (Fig. 4).[14]

He saw research as an exercise that would not "leave the entire project to more or less lengthy descriptions and more or less detailed plans."[15] It was about understanding the town's past urbanism, using every means at his disposal to collate it with the present reality, interpret it, and work accordingly. His idea was to piece together the fragments of a lost past to conjure up, amid its remains, a new town, adapted and updated. He likened urban reconstruction to reconstituting a fragmented vase, joining the remaining pieces and evoking a town's memory with new fabric, as an opaque coating "carefully covers the wounds" and, by joining fragments, recovers the unique form of an antique vessel.[16]

Rather than restore Hondarribia as it had been, he built a new town, heir to the previous one, with a structure consistent with the extant fabric but transformed, and with new public spaces meeting the needs of his time. Rather than seeking to recover an idealized past—a widespread view of his enterprise—he acknowledged the limits of reconstruction: "We can never restore to the present, in all its purity, what once was, with the force of life."[17]

He spoke of a mental process: "To bring another time, another era, back to life is not to draw back a curtain completely, for that is impossible. […] The past comes to our minds through conjecture, through deduction, through memory and the association of ideas, through diligent study, through casual reading, and through comparison with the present, sometimes for better, sometimes for worse."[18] These reflections from his masterplan, whose value has not been sufficiently highlighted, show how far an exploratory approach shaped his project for Hondarribia.

The old town, as seen through his eyes, consisted of two realms: on the one hand, the walls defining its boundary, much of which had been destroyed in the last French occupation and which he proposed to rebuild. On the other hand was the town *intra muros*, which had retained part of its structure but was largely depopulated, particularly in the east and north, where vegetable gardens coexisted with the remains of ancient walls, barracks, and the occasional building.



Figure 4: Areas built on and town walls destroyed or ruined since the early seventeenth century

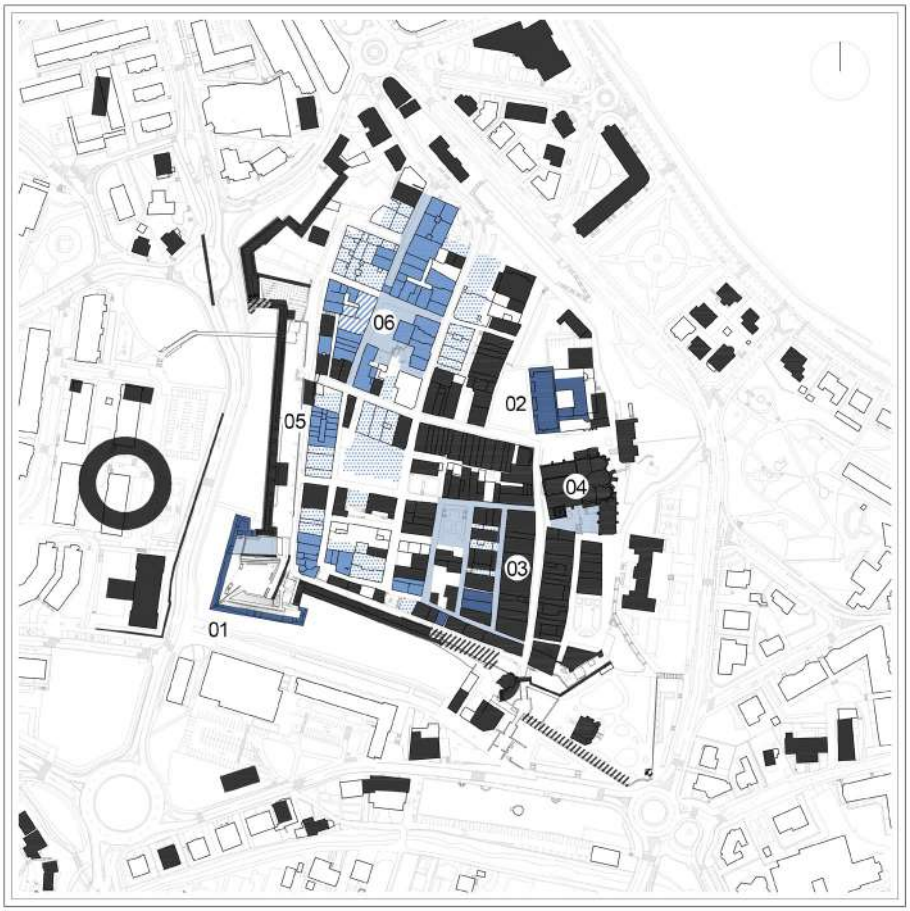


Figure 5: Buildings and spaces developed by Manzano-Monís. Shaded: built under his direction in 1959–1972; hatched: built by other architects in the same period; dotted: areas proposed for development in his plan

Legend: 1) Queen's Bastion, 2) Castle of Charles V, 3) Pampinot street, 4) Vicar's Square, 5) New urban façade, 6) Gipuzkoa Plaza

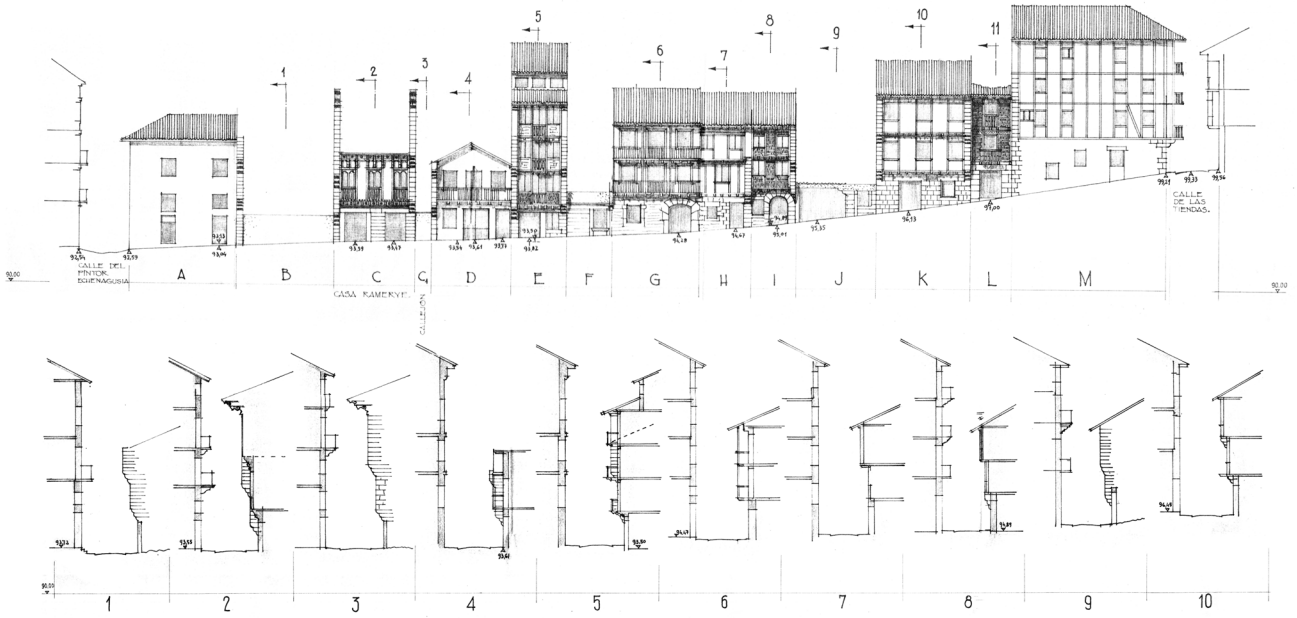


Figure 6: Survey of Calle Pampinot (1962) with elevations and cross-sections assembled by the authors (HUA, U-177-I-1)

Manzano-Monís's plan for Hondarribia set out three strategies for intervention, all with the idea of restoring the unity of the walled quarter: first, reconstruction of the fortified enclosure, seen as essential to the town's image; second, restoration of the extant urban fabric, regenerating its streets and squares and promoting restorations; and third, creation of a new center to complement the extant fabric and create a hub linked with the town's expansion beyond its walls.

Reconstruction of the Town Walls

Manzano-Monís proposed rebuilding almost all of the walls that had once protected the town, demolishing the buildings attached to them. Once the geometry of this fortified base had been restored, "the military dihedrals and edges" of the walls "through which the town conversed with the water" would once again "define the urban profile" (Fig. 7).[19]

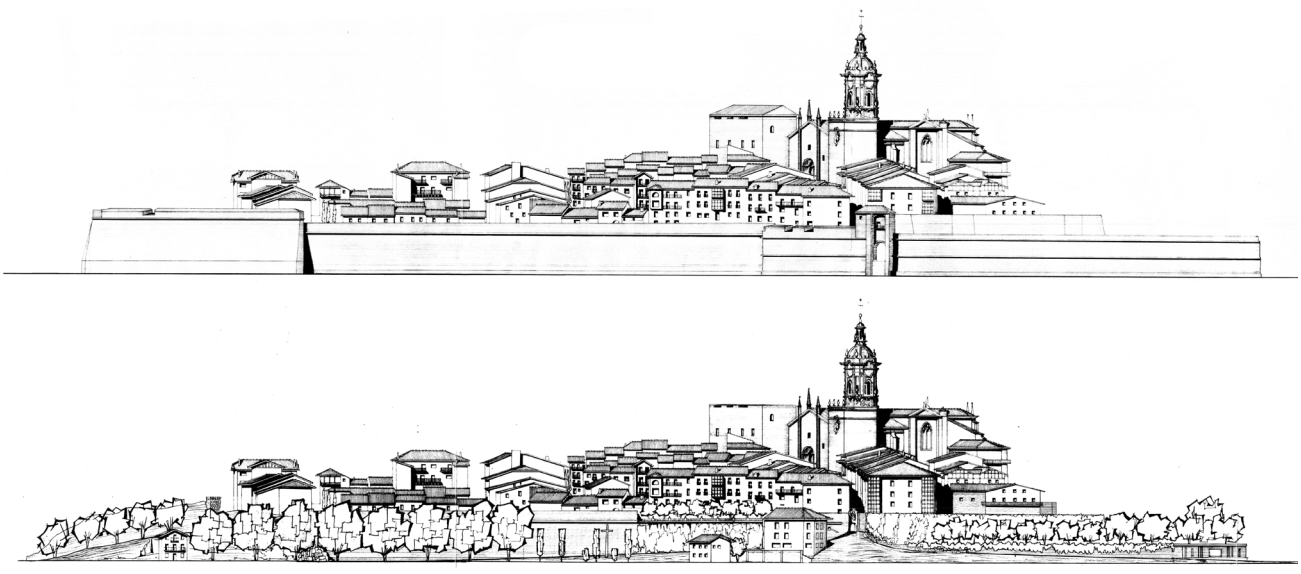


Figure 7: South elevations of the walled town in its current state and with the walls as they were in the seventeenth century (HUA, U-192-II-01)

The ambitious reconstruction program involved a reorganization of access routes to the historic center to preserve vehicular access to the walled area, as many such routes ran through breaches opened by the French army during its last occupation and which the reconstruction work required to be closed. Manzano-Monís proposed that the main historic approach from the south be restored and vehicular access from the north opened up. The new layout of streets and squares would thus be directly linked with the outer district, which had become Hondarribia's new center.

As for the reconstruction approach, the masterplan outlined guidelines to be refined as work progressed. As can be seen from the limited reconstruction of the walls that was carried out, the structures as drawn in the outline plans gave way to a more sensitive treatment in which the austere form of the restored walls is articulated with the town's extant fabric.

Reconstruction of the Queen's Bastion

Of the ambitious program to rebuild the ramparts, the Queen's Bastion was the only part to be carried out. The project involved rebuilding the two outer faces, blown up by the French in 1795, and demolishing the large fronton court that had obscured the south wall.[20]

The primary aim was to restore the geometry of the pointed corner, where the two widest surviving wall sections—west and south—had been breached. Manzano-Monís clad the exposed remains in two heavy, steeply sloping walls of sandstone ashlars following the plan of the old bastion. The large quantity of materials required for this came from demolitions during expansion work in San Sebastián and the adjacent fronton court. The angle between the two faces was crowned with a handsome protruding sandstone sentry turret, with the historic walls unfolding on either side and forming a now iconic landmark.

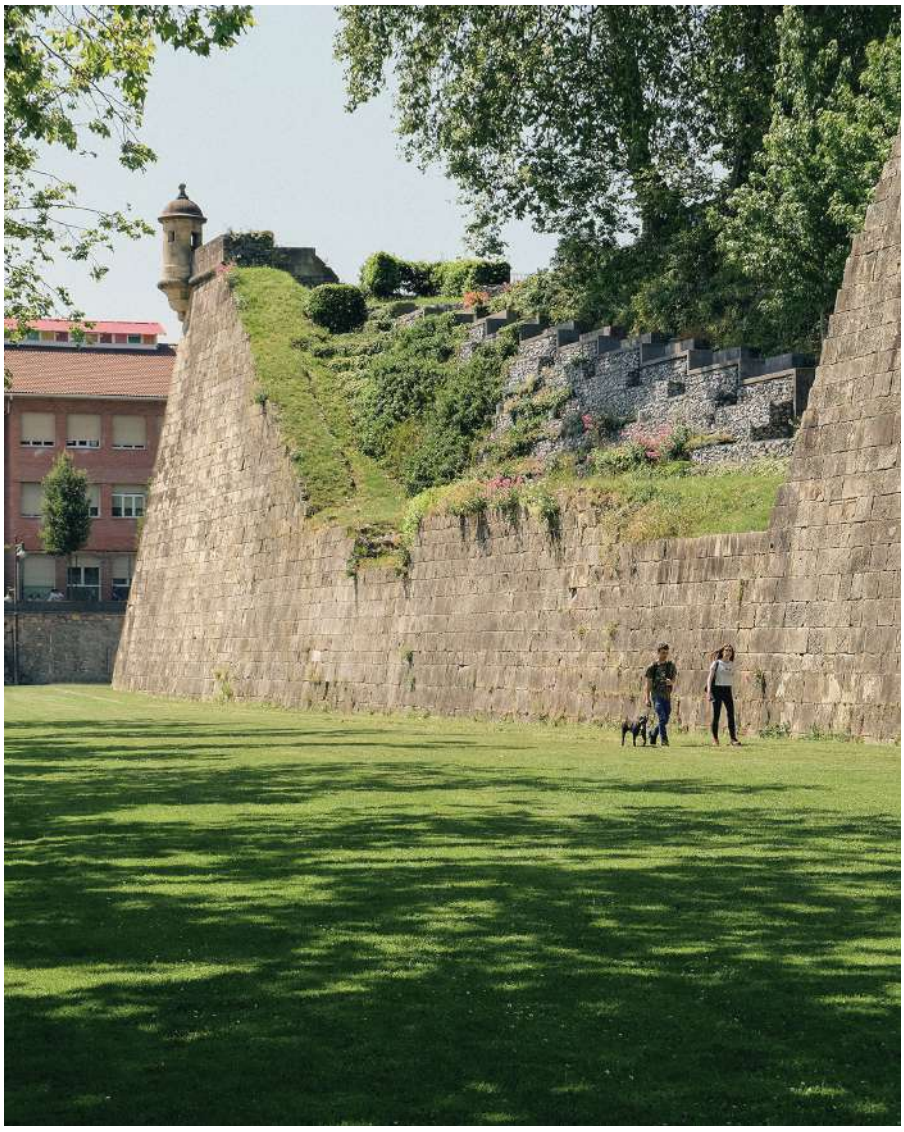


Figure 8: Current view of the Queen's Bastion, with sandstone outer walls by Manzano-Monís and gabions filling the breaches by Iñiguez & Ustarroz

Despite the workmanship of this restoration, the walls built by Manzano-Monís could hardly match the massiveness of the defensive structures they clad, up to eight meters thick. His project was accordingly supplemented in 2006 by the architects Iñiguez & Ustarroz, who had been present during that visit by Léon Krier and Maurice Culot. They dug out and reformed the heart of the bastion, tying Manzano-Monís's cladding to the inner structure using gabions to close gaps and restore the original massiveness (Díez Oronoz et.al. 2017: 325-331).

Restoration of the Extant Urban Fabric

For the south slope of the walled town, Manzano-Monís devised a comprehensive program to regenerate the streets and squares. First was the restoration of Calle Pampinot, which had been in the council's sights for years, along with other spots which he identified and assessed with insight and sensitivity. Beyond the grander spaces and buildings, he appreciated the variety and value of vernacular architecture, recognizing the diversity that its mix created in the townscape, as meticulously described in his proposal.

Although most of the layout remained intact, he proposed adjustments where accessibility needed improving or a particular building was to be highlighted, such as his alteration of the alignment of Calle San Nicolás to draw attention to the medieval gate and a fine pre-existing house. He also proposed restoring historic urban spaces such as the *paseadero*, now Plaza del Vicario, and consolidating others, such as the former marketplace.

Restoration of the Castle of Charles V

Manzano-Monís's first project in the town center was a partial restoration of the Castle of Charles V, for a 1959 exhibition commemorating the Peace of the Pyrenees (1659).[21] For centuries the residence of the fortified town's governor and garrison, this is a medieval castle with a sixteenth-century artillery platform—a prism of sandstone masonry overlooking a parade ground, whose presence, "the purity of its cubic volume," was so evocative for our protagonist.[22]

By the 1950s the castle was in ruins. All its staterooms had been burnt out during the last French occupation and subsequent neglect had reduced what remained. Only the thick medieval walls around the courtyard were still standing, along with the monumental artillery platform, beneath whose barrel vaults the floor structures that once housed the garrison barracks were much dilapidated.

Manzano-Monís restored the artillery platform interiors and reinforced the remains of the courtyard, thereby preserving the romantic air of this often photographed site. For the platform he designed a sequence of floor plans, creating double- and triple-height spaces highlighting the sweeping barrel vaults. These were later converted into the rooms of the current Parador hotel.

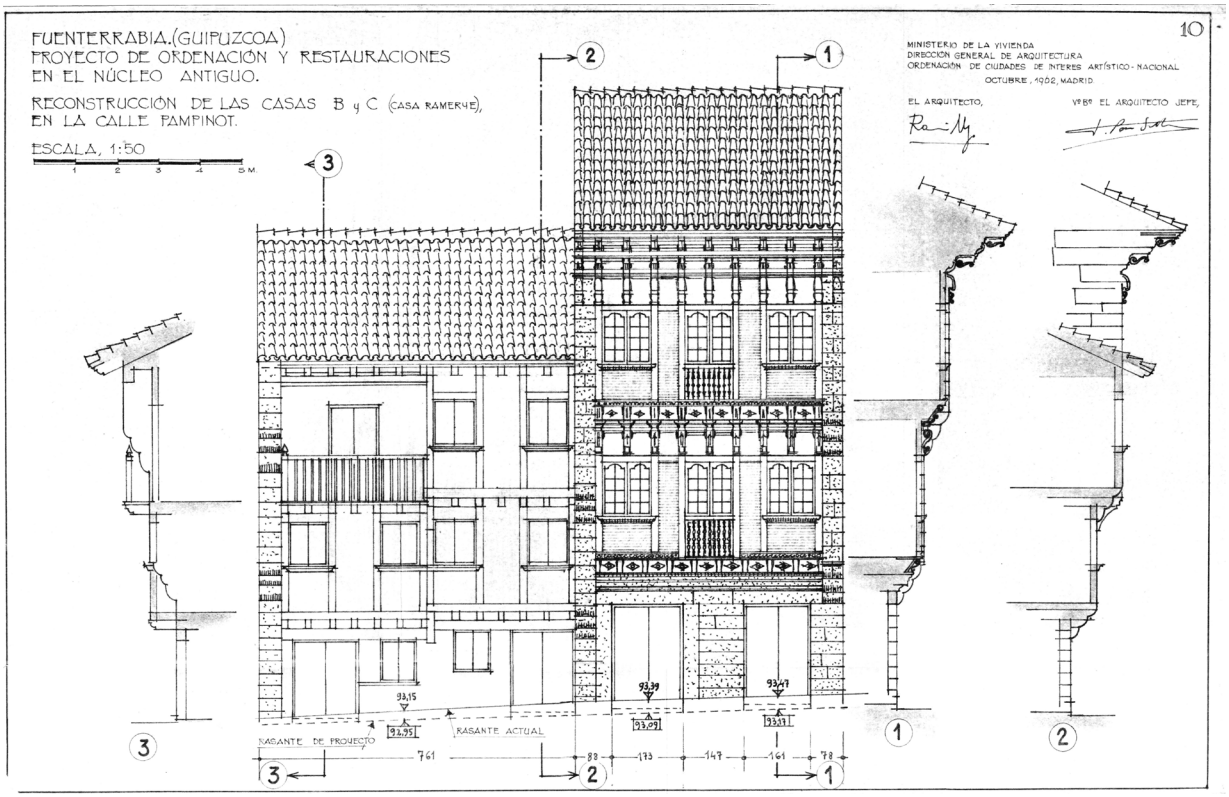


Figure 9: Elevation and sections for the reconstruction of Palacio Ramery in Calle Pampinot (HUA, U-177-I-01)

Rebuilding of Calle Pampinot

Calle Pampinot's distinctive appeal stems from the contrast between the grandeur of the high street, to which it runs parallel, and its own more vernacular character. The rear facades of the town's mansions, austere and varied, seem at odds with the domestic scale of this streetscape, with timber-framed facades and balconies between jutting party walls. Among these more modest houses, a few dwellings of greater stature and antiquity stand out, such as Palacio Ramery.

The project encompassed the grading of slopes and resurfacing of nearby streets as well as the redevelopment of Plaza del Mercado, a void left by the demolition of the covered market and slaughterhouse a few years before Manzano-Monís's time. Two residential buildings to form a new elevation by the square were proposed but never built.[23]

The facades on Calle Pampinot were partially restored by the Directorate-General for Architecture at no cost to the owners.[24] The work in the quarter culminated with the reconstruction of the house known as Palacio Ramery (Fig. 9), of which only the stone walls and some timber beams subsisted. Manzano-Monís restored the fine timberwork with slightly projecting overlapping panels and double eaves featuring Baroque corbels like those to be seen along the high street.

Plaza del Vicario

Manzano-Monís's last urban regeneration project was probably one of his finest, involving the reorganization of the space to the south of the parish church, formerly a cemetery and referred to in documents as *paseadero* (promenade), connecting the high street with the east walls and giving onto the estuary. The site had been disfigured by the construction of a rectory, occupying much of the space and privatizing the remainder as well as blocking the thoroughfare.[25]

Although no project documents survive, we know the square was developed following the rectory's demolition in 1974.[26] Its inclusion within Manzano-Monís's overall plan and its consistency in approach and materials with his other work leave no doubt as to authorship.

He reorganized the space through a sequence of terraces structuring circulation and restoring the old promenade between the high street and the eastern town walls. The series of levels is defined by low sandstone walls that lend dynamism to the space, unified by pebble paving laid in circular patterns. This material unity helps stitch together the facades delimiting the square, grouping the walls of the church, the sacristy, and the adjacent houses around an intimate space at the foot of the Baroque bell tower by Francisco de Ibero, making a focal point (Figs. 10-12).

Figures 10-12: Plaza del Vicario, with the steps and cobblestone paving characterizing the space by the church





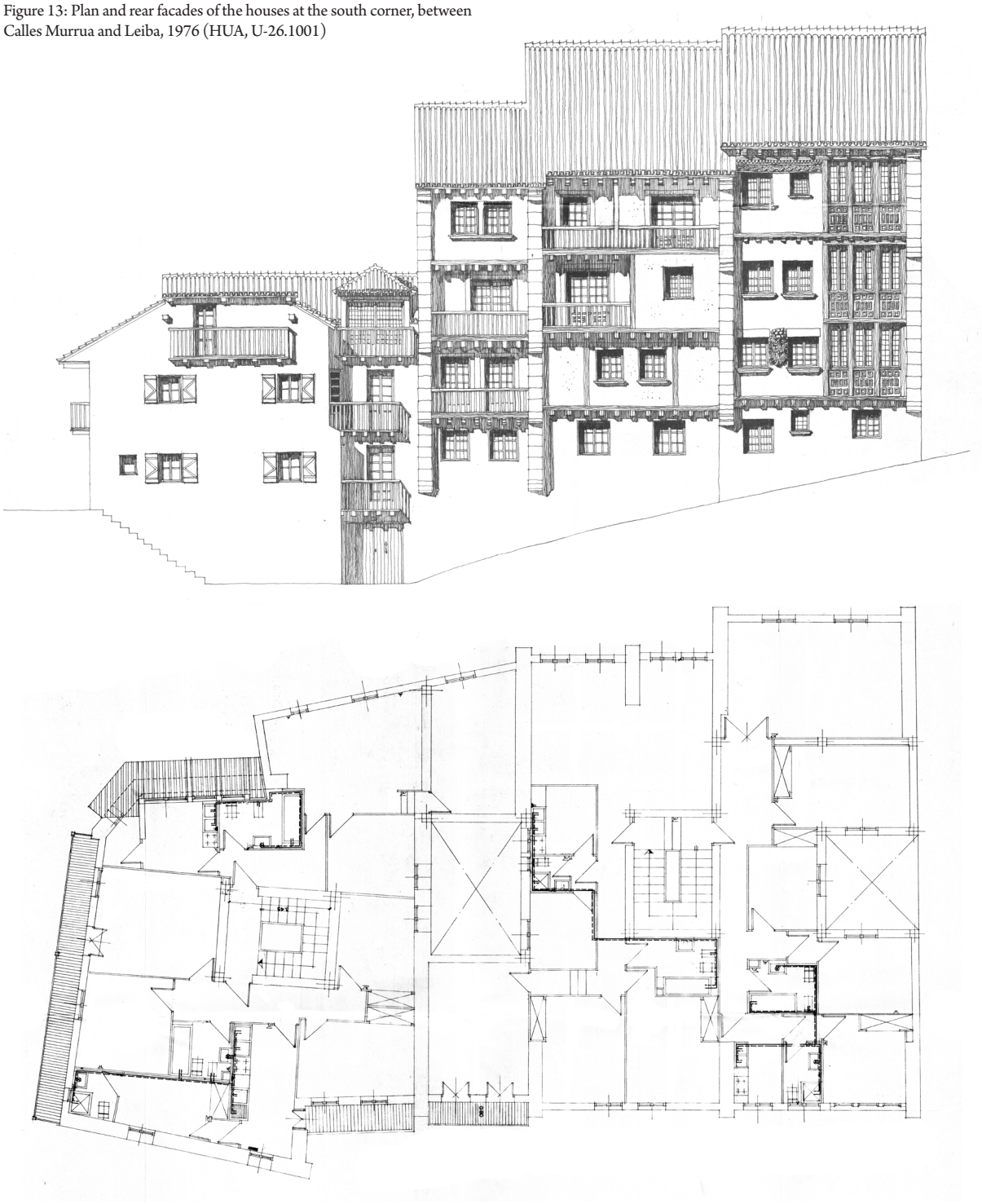


Access from the high street is via the facade of the Baroque Palacio Zuloaga, framed by the bell-tower walls, the party wall of the adjoining house, and the square's cobblestone paving. The approach from Calle Fraxkueneko Murrua has the church's central stairway and south facade as a backdrop. Side access to the church is via a sequence of zigzagging steps flanked by low stone walls. With the rectory adjoining the sacristy having been demolished, the square opens out onto the adjacent streets, incorporating the bell tower's monumental presence into the east of the walled precinct.

New Urban Fabric

The regeneration plan involved the development and consolidation of the depopulated areas of the historic center, which at that time accounted for much of the walled town. In the western part, market gardens coexisted with ruined walls and vacant lots resulting from war damage and neglect. The northern half had never had a continuous urban fabric and was largely uninhabited with vegetable gardens, shacks, and a few isolated buildings. Manzano-Monís reorganized

Figure 13: Plan and rear facades of the houses at the south corner, between Calles Murrua and Leiba, 1976 (HUA, U-26.1001)



all this, redeveloping vacant plots on the west side and creating a new urban center to the north. This revolved around a large square with shops designed to be a hub within the walled precinct and a link between the existing streets, the new layout, and the exterior.

The project paid particular attention to urban scale, taking massing as a basis for relationships between monumental buildings and residential units. This gave rise to meticulously designed facades defining the streets and squares. Their composition was based on a toolkit[27] derived from vernacular characteristics such as dimensions, materials and finishes, reflecting the local way of life. The exceptional sequence of facades created by Manzano-Monís thus followed a logic in which the balance of the urban whole took precedence over the individual form of each house, with every facade, corner, portico, or bay window playing a role in the townscape.

Accordingly he designed new buildings in the walled town with close attention to construction quality and materials, in keeping with his sensitive approach to urban fabric. In the face of the dominance of industrial construction, he championed traditional crafts as a guarantee of architectural dignity.[28] Working with a network of craftsmen, he realized an architecture rich in detail: stonework, timber framing, carved eaves, bay windows, ironwork, corbels, and capitals. These elements reflect the workmanship of stonemasons, carpenters, and plasterers, still apparent throughout.

New Frontage Facing the Town Walls

For the west side of the town, Manzano-Monís devised a new facade sequence to face the west walls, where the houses, formerly built right on the medieval walls, had disappeared through war and neglect. He regenerated this quarter with new residential buildings on the abandoned plots, doing much of the work himself, though it was later completed by other architects.[29]

The new sequence comprised four-story buildings rising above the parapet of the Renaissance walls. Although the flats are grouped around stairwells and form larger blocks, the Gothic character is retained with narrow facades. What appears is thus a series of facades enclosed between projecting ashlar party walls resting on corbels, characteristic of the town. The rhythmic succession of facades is enriched with a variety of dimensions and compositions in the elevations: timber-framed or smooth-plastered fronts, openings with shutters, balconies, bay windows, and wooden galleries are distributed harmoniously below wide wooden eaves and staggered rooftops (Fig. 14).

One of Manzano-Monís's strategies within the walled precinct was to create new frontage to reorganize the urban fabric, seeking integration and connection between streets and interiors. Interior layouts were designed to be consistent with exterior volumes and their relationship with their sur-



Figure 14: Wooden enclosed balconies and eaves giving onto Calle Leiba

roundings. In addition to consolidating the old town's western aspect, the new buildings remodeled the space to the rear, linking different levels and creating a dynamic sequence, with streets that break off and open into small squares and recesses.

Plaza de Gipuzkoa: A New Center in the Old Town

Manzano-Monís's most notable and best-known project was a newly created square in a depopulated part of the walled town, extending the existing street layout to the north and connecting the walled precinct with the old fishermen's quarter and outlying districts. Although the masterplan had provided for this square, he modified its shape and size to suit the scale of its surroundings and to integrate recent buildings,[30] such as a residential block taller than planned and an unplanned street.[31] These circumstances necessitated a rethink of the initial more regular design toward greater spatial complexity.

With these constraints, the new square was organized with contrasting frontage that makes the space dynamic. Two straight elevations with ground-floor porticos are aligned with Calle Carnicería, which crosses the square toward the outer districts. From this axis, the square opens out to the south, where the facades form a more articulated series, advancing and receding. This results in a contained space that expands at the edges, broadening perspectives and facilitating connectivity (Fig. 15).[32]

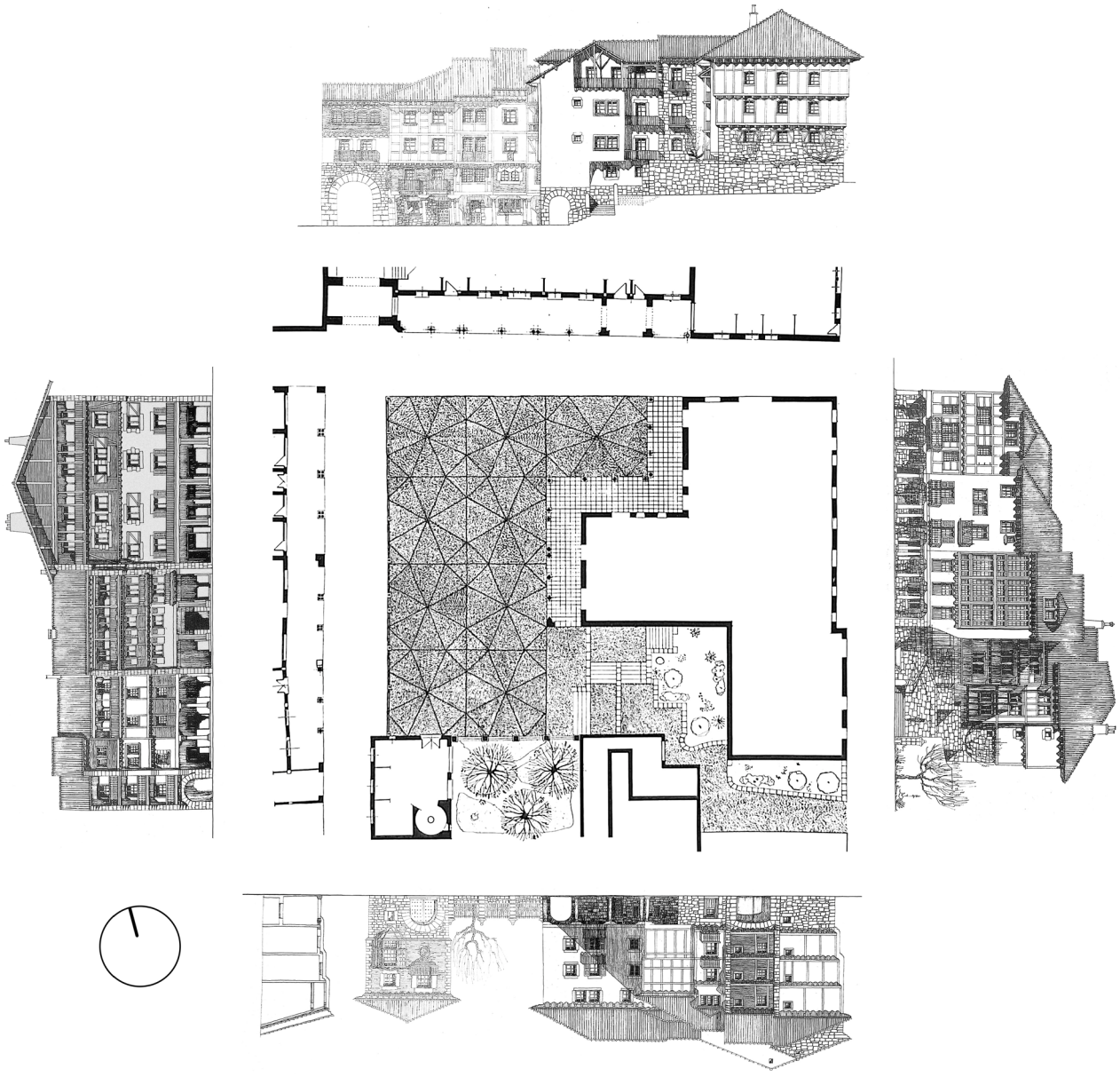
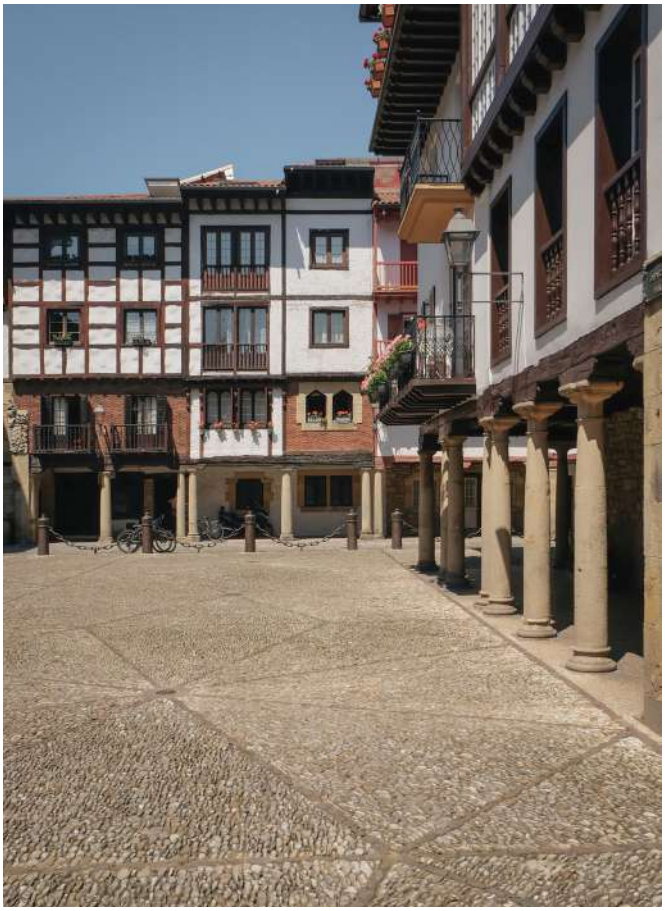


Figure 15: Plan, sections, and elevations of the new square, with two buildings shaded in grey built a few years before Manzano-Monís's time. Photomontage based on plans published in *Archives d'architecture moderne* (Barey 1982)









To the north, the street entering the square from the east widens into a plaza flanked by porticos and opening onto the central space. The eye is thus drawn toward the larger-scale house built a few years earlier on this street. Its presence, accentuated by a high gable, is integrated into the square's space as just another element. To the south, the square's corner opens onto the rear walls and volumes of Calle San Nikolas, which contribute to a second void featuring a succession of steps and platforms simulating a ruined garden. As in the smaller Plaza del Vicario, the low walls flanking these tiers resolve the marked difference in level in this approach, forming a zigzagging path climbing away through the greenery.

To one side, a smaller house closes the south frontage and flanks the approach from Calle Carnicería, where the new rectory stands with its vegetable garden, bordering the main garden. Finally, the corner of more regular frontage is reinforced by an arch that frames the view of Calle Carnicería and serves as a landmark for the outer neighborhoods (Figs. 16-19).

The masses of the buildings unfold across the landscape of the square with a sense of material unity, enlivened by a varied composition of elevations and integrating the facades of pre-existing fabric. The rhythm of the ground-floor porticos is varied with the succession of single and paired pillars, of stone or timber. The rhythm of facades is sequenced by their projecting party walls or eaves, interrupted and overlapping. The interplay of volumes and linkage of buildings on the south side help balance the austerity of the two more regular sides, letting light through all day thanks to the setback alignment and the open corners. On all four sides, timber-framed facades alternate with brick or stucco fronts, dotted with windows of varying compositions.

Here the quality of construction and creative freedom in the details conceived by Manzano-Monís reach their zenith. It is also worth noting the fine pebble paving across the middle of the square, contained between bands of cobblestone defining the axes of the streets and the portico flooring.

< Figures 16-19: Views of the square from the corners, showing the variety of frontage.

> Figures 20-21: Details showing the quality of work.





Conclusions

Fifty years on, the success of the urban spaces created by Manzano-Monís in Hondarribia and their effectiveness in revitalizing the old walled town are beyond question. With the passage of time, the opposition met by Manzano-Monís's reconstructions has given way to a positive view. The "undeniable architectural quality" of his work may be said to have been unanimously acknowledged. This is evident when compared with later interventions, with far less architectural and even landscape quality, generally executed with imitation materials, as rightly noted by the drafters of the latest special development plan for the old town (Lasa 2021: 44).

In just over a decade, Manzano-Monís transformed a declining and partially depopulated historic center into a legible and habitable townscape. He did so with rigor in his understanding of the site, after analyzing the town's history of urbanism and architecture. His project went beyond mere recovery of the past, involving a painstaking reassembly of extant fabric, a restoration of degraded spaces, and the building of new ones where needed. Through the design of new fabric and frontage, he gave renewed significance to an incomplete and dilapidated yet historic town.

Many of the town's most handsome and vibrant squares, streets, and corners bear his discreet imprint. The pre-existing fabric was enhanced by the regeneration he led, giving it continuity, context, and scale. If today the walled town of Hondarribia throbs with vitality, it is thanks to the unity and coherence which he imparted to its reconstruction (Azpiri 2003: 183), to the quality of his architectural designs and renewed urban fabric, creating spaces of harmony and beauty, to his sensitivity in seeing the value of neglected sites and regenerating them, and to his understanding of the contribution of traditional crafts to our architecture's material dignity.

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*The abbreviation HUA refers to documents held in the Hondarribia Municipal Archive (Hondarribiko Udal Artxiboa) and is followed by the corresponding archival reference.

[1] The floor area of the buildings constructed under Manzano-Monís's masterplan almost doubled that of the houses then extant (40%). Of this increase, half of the buildings (53%) were designed and built by Manzano-Monís himself, accounting for 21% of the current area

[2] These were Migel Garai, Manuel Iñiguez, José Ignacio Linazasoro, and Alberto Ustarroz.

[3] For a comprehensive account of architecture and urbanism in twentieth-century Hondarribia, see the research of Ana Azpiri published by Hondarribia town council (Azpiri 2003). For a summary, see Azpiri's paper presented a year earlier at the University of Navarra (Azpiri 2002). Regarding the extremes between which criticism has swung, see her article in the journal *Akobe* (2005).

[4] Some of the town's most significant architectural works—the Town Hall (1731), the Alameda (c. 1738), and Francisco de Ibero's Baroque bell tower (1764)—are from this period. This suggests that public works were undertaken in an attempt, through civic architecture, to resist the town's seemingly inevitable military decline. Regarding the fortification projects proposed over the eighteenth century to restore the town's strategic importance, see Aritz Díez Oronoz (2014).

[5] Mayor Sagarzazu said, "Heritage site designation imposes restrictions on the town that significantly hamper the freedom of action for any urban development initiative" (HUA), Minutes of 15 September 1951).

[6] Manzano-Monís's involvement in the general development plan was intermittent. He replaced Pedro Muguruza in 1952, but Félix Llanos took over in 1957 until Manzano-Monís took charge in 1959, up to its completion (HUA, U-384-01).

[7] HUA, Minutes, 1/12/1958.

[8] In the document submitted in 1972, the council complained of the architect's "repeated and blatant interference" in "municipal affairs," which, in its view, amounted to a "clear disregard for the nature and authority of the Council." They pointed out that Manzano-Monís acted as both judge and jury. It also included a list of the buildings he had built: 168 dwellings in the old town and a further 149 outside it (Azpiri 2005: 87). By this point, the council had become aware of the oversight implications of Manzano-Monís's regulatory strategy, and when a second process was begun in 1970 to have the historic outlying district declared a heritage site, the council opposed it categorically (Azpiri 2002: 69).

[9] Both documents—the historical study and the development plan—formed part of his approach from the outset. Whilst the plan brief is dated July 1962, Manzano-Monís had informed the mayor the year before that he had begun work on the project. "Although what I have is still very preliminary," he noted, "I have more or less sketched out the general outline" (HUA, U-192-II-01).

[10] HUA, U-177-I-1.

[11] HUA, U-192-03.

[12] The full account of housing projects in the municipal archive is as follows: 12 dwellings on Calle Pintor Etxenagusia (1963), 16 dwellings for S. Tellechea (1963), 3 dwellings on Calle Juan Laborda (1964), 12 on Calle Carnicería (1965), a project for dwellings between Calles Ubilla and Eguzki (1966), 20 dwellings between Calles Carnicería and Leiba (1966), 8 dwellings on Calle Ubilla (1966), 12 dwellings on Calle Juan Laborda (1966), a project for the reconstruction of a dwelling on Calle Murrua (1967), more dwellings on Calle Leiba (1967), a project for the Kerizpe house (1969), 8 dwellings on Calle Ubilla (1970), more dwellings on Calle Carnicería (1970), and a final set of dwellings on Calle Pampinot (1971).

[13] Although this research suffers from the defects of its time—a somewhat grandiose tone and a nationalistic view of history—it is the first comprehensive study of the walled town.

[14] His findings were presented at an exhibition organized by himself. In an interview in *Diario Vasco*, he spoke of his fascination with the town's fortifications, which were to be central to his plan (Seisdedos 1962).

[15] HUA, U-192-II-01: 51.

[16] This likening of urban regeneration to the reassembly of a fragmented Greek vase appears in the concluding statement of Manzano-Monís's project brief (HUA, U-192-II-01: 51-52).

[17] HUA, U-192-II-01: 20-21.

[18] HUA, U-192-II-01: 21.

[19] HUA, U-192-II-0115.

[20] The file in the municipal archive contains no plans or project briefs, but the works were carried out from 1964 to 1972, the date of the earliest photos of the project (HUA, U-192-I-06).

[21] HUA, U-100-II.

[22] HUA: 48.

[23] HUA, U-177-1 and HUA, U-09-1002.

[24] HUA, U-177-I-1.

[25] This house was built in 1905 and extended three years later to include a large terrace (HUA, D-6-I-1).

[26] AHPG-GPAH, 3/0385, p. 25.

[27] In the French text by André Barey this term is given as *module d'accompagnement* (Barey 1982: 37).

[28] Manzano-Monís's interest in arts and crafts dates back to at least 1943, when he organized several exhibitions on the subject in Albacete. His commitment to traditional crafts enabled him to build up a network of

craftspeople across the country, which proved invaluable in Hondarribia (Barey 1982: 37).

[29] The first two blocks of flats in the central area date from 1965 (HUA, U-75-2 and HUA, U-82-5); the northern part was built in 1966, as part of the new square (HUA, U-902), and the southern section was designed in 1967 (HUA, U-26-7).

[30] In his first site plan, dated 1959, Manzano-Monís followed the masterplan layout to the letter, but this was substantially modified in the second draft; the original design was more rectangular, wider, and with porticos on all sides (HUA, U-192-02).

[31] In the surviving plans, as reported by Manzano Monís, the outline envisaged is drawn in red pencil on the main elevation, showing a height almost one and a half stories lower (HUA, U-80-1.1001.12).

[32] In his brief Manzano Monís speaks of his "concern [that] the new square should not be excessively high, so as not to detract in any way from the characteristic skyline of the old town" (HUA, U-192-03).

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Aritz Díez Oronoz

Aritz holds a degree in architecture from the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU) and an MA in Heritage Restoration from the same university. He is a professor of Architectural Design and has been a visiting researcher at the universities of Florence and Parma and the IUAV in Venice. He earned his PhD in 2019 and his research spans topics ranging from the Italian Renaissance and military architecture to historic towns and vernacular architecture.

Imanol Iparraguirre Barbero

Imanol holds a degree in architecture from the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU) and an MA in Heritage Restoration from the same university, where he has also taught. He has been a visiting researcher at the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut in Madrid and Rome as well as at the Bibliotheca Hertziana in Rome. His research focuses on classical architecture, with emphasis on the concepts of model and type, and the meaning of architectural form.