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Management of the Greek's ekistics and cultural heritage in Turkey

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Theme P: Tourism, cultural and creative industries and regional development

Title: Management of the Greek's ekistics and cultural heritage in Turkey

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Abstract

Turkey constitutes a country privileged with ekistics and cultural heritage of crucial interest that is linked to ancient civilizations. Over the past decades, the turkish government has been formatting and developing a protective institutional framework, concerning the preservation of its historical environment. However, the country has endured many political and economical alterations that have influenced the qualitative character of the monumental architecture, as well as the regional development of historical communities.

This paper deals with the Greek's cultural heritage in Turkey today, targeting on the enhancement of strategic solutions that concern the symbiosis of the dualism of greek origin ekistics heritage and tourism development in the turkish territories. The methodology approach is achieved through bibliography and in situ research and analysis that have taken place during a scientific research program concerning the Greek's cultural presence in Asia Minor (17th- 20th centuries). In addition to that, a thorough examination is followed in the evaluation of the existing turkish and international institutional framework, regarding the protection of the Greek's ekistics and monumental heritage in Turkey.

In this context, a series of strategic measures is proposed in order to preserve and enhance the cultural value and aesthetics of the Greek's heritage in Turkey today. The governmental administration and international legislation, the elimination of bureaucratic issues, the promotion of strategic planning on both urban and architectural level, as well as the encouragement of the interstate relations between Turkey and Greece, are some of the potential solutions highly underlined in this paper.

Key words: *ekistics heritage, institutional framework, protection, enhancement, strategic planning, Turkey - Greece*

1. Introduction

The term sustainability is directly related to culture, especially in the last years, so as a result, the viability of a site does not have a meaning, if this does not refer to the triangle: environment-economy-culture¹.

Moreover, the interaction between human and nature is directly related to the formation and evolution of the landscapes. The general awareness of environmental issues in accordance with standards of integrated and sustainable development is stronger than ever².

The relationship between natural and cultural environment is of intensive concern as they are two opposing but complementary concepts at the same time. The most prevailing view is that in which the natural and cultural environment are forms of a single environment. Natural elements and human projects are included in the overall environmental system and interact, affecting the ecological balance, quality of life, historical and cultural traditions and aesthetic values.

There are three consecutive completions regarding the policy of protection of natural and cultural heritage. Specifically: a) The single spatial and ecological view of nature, the unity of significant and insignificant, ecosystems (networks of protected areas, not individual objects of protection). b) The overall view of nature and culture, i.e. the overall treatment of natural and cultural heritage, since it is neither possible nor desirable a distinction between natural and anthropogenic components. c) Addressing protection and management of heritage in combination with the needs of local communities and in the context of socioeconomic development³.

At this point, tourism enters as a major factor in shaping the natural and cultural environment of an area. Tourist activities cause changes in intercultural relations, manners and customs of the regions, while equally important is the impact on the natural environment, all of those disturbing its equilibrium. According to the latest figures, the entry of Turkey in the global tourism map is a critical point for tourism development. Turkey is present in all major international events, simplifying development processes and systematically enriching the

¹ Mitoula R., 2006, *Sustainable Regional Development in the European Union and Reconstruction of the Greek Urban Environment*, Publications Stamoulis, Athens

² Konsola N.N., 2006, *Cultural Development and Policy*, Publications Papazisis, Athens

³ Beriatos, I. (2007) *The role of spatial planning in disaster, with emphasis on natural and cultural heritage at the conference "The prospect of Reconstruction after Destruction"* TEE (Greece Technical Chamber)-DEPARTMENT OF WESTERN GREECE, available at http://library.tee.gr/digital/m2264/m2264_beriatos.pdf [access 29/5/2012]

local characteristics. Into this context contributes the existence of Greek ekistics heritage, particularly along the coast and inland, as a key point of natural-cultural heritage.

2. Cultural heritage in Asia Minor: Greek's ekistics heritage

The national lists

The Convention for the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage was ratified by the Republic of Turkey in 1982 (in force since 1983) and includes among other things, lists of national reserves and areas of cultural interest. The lists of natural and cultural properties were prepared by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, in cooperation with relevant associations and organizations, as defined by the law for the preservation of cultural and natural heritage (N.2863, as amended by Law 3386 and 5226). In addition, the General Directorate manages charitable foundations, buildings and institutions in need of conservation and protection such as mosques, tombs, medresedes, hotels, public baths, dervish monasteries, buildings, fountains and caravanserais of private or public property⁴.

Indicatively, the lists prepared in cooperation with UNESCO and ICOMOS of Turkey, list 18 areas, two of which are natural-cultural sites and others 16 that are of cultural property:

1. Selimiye Mosque in Adrianople
2. Ottoman Urban and Rural Settlements in Bursa and Cumalıkızık
3. The capital of Seljuks, Konya
4. Alanya Citadel and Dockyard
5. Seljuks' Karavansarai in Denizli-Doğubeyazıt
6. The Ishakpaşa Palace
7. Harran and Şanlıurfa Settlements
8. The citadel and fortress of Diyarbakır
9. Ancient settlement and tombstones of Ahlat
10. Panagia Sumela Monastery
11. Alahan Monastery
12. Church of St. Nicholas in Demre, Finike
13. Church of St. Paul in Tarsus and surrounding historic quarters
14. Kekova
15. Güllük Mountain and Termessos National Park (Antalya)

⁴ Official Journal of the European Union, 2010, *Cultural Heritage and planetary changes: a new challenge for Europe*, available at <http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:106:0018:0019:el:PDF> [access 20/4/2012]

16. Karain
17. Mardin
18. Ephesus

The areas included in the final World Heritage list are the followings⁵:

Historic areas of Istanbul, 1985 (Cultural), (Archaeological Park- defined at the tip of the peninsula-Süleymaniye quarter, the Zeyrek quarter, zone of the ramparts)

Hagia Sophia church, 1985 (Cultural)

Göreme National Park the Rock Sites of Cappadocia, 1985 (Natural / Cultural)

Great Mosque and Hospital Divriği, 1985, (Cultural)

Hattusha, 1986, (Cultural)

Mount Nemrut, 1987, (Cultural)

Xanthos - Letoon 1988, (Cultural)

Hierapolis, Pamukkale, 1988, (Physical / cultural)

City of Safranbolu, 1994, (Cultural)

Archaeological Site of Troy, 1998, (Cultural) ⁶.

Greek's cultural and ekistics heritage

Classified archaeological sites, religious monuments and traditional villages of Greek interest are:

A. Archaeological Sites

Ephesus, Archaeological Site of Troy, 1998, ancient theater of Halicarnassus, Kekova, Mount Nemrut, Hierapolis, Pamukkale, Xanthos – Letoon

B. Religious Monuments

Monastery of Panagia Sumela, Monastery of Alahan, Cappadocia (cluster of Christian Orthodox chapels and churches in the large landscape of rock-carved valley with remarkable Byzantine frescoes), Church of St. Nicholas, Church of St. Paul and surrounding historic quarters. At last, out of the Historic Areas Istanbul the churches that outstand are the following: Justinian churches of Hagia Sophia, St. Irene, Küçük Ayasofya Mosque (the former church of the Sts Sergius and Bacchus), the Pantocrator Monastery founded under John II Comnene by

⁵ ICOMOS: <http://www.icomos.org.tr> and www.unesco.org/culture [access 29/5/2012]

⁶Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2012, KÜLTÜR VE TURİZM BAKANLIĞI, available in: <http://www.kultur.gov.tr>. [access 24/4/2012]

Empress Irene; the former Church of the Holy Saviour of Chora. Unesco in collaboration with the Turkish Government⁷.

C. Traditional settlements

Cappadocia and traditional settlements that do not belong on the list but are potential cultural heritage sites and are in the Black Sea, Istanbul and the coast of Asia Minor until Marmara Antalya and Adana (Mersin).

Especially in the coast of Asia Minor is worth mentioning, that today a great number of settlements is rescued and they are part of larger areas, of monumental architectural and cultural interest, such as those of the Propontis (Marmara Island, Cyzicus Peninsula), in Bithynia, the Region of Ayvalik, the peninsula Eritrea, Lycia etc. Additionally, many of these settlements are currently protected by the Cultural-Natural Heritage Act 2863, which defines which buildings are under the protection of Regions Committees (e.g. Marmara settlements with buildings protected by the Commission of Bursa according to law 2863: Bursa Kultur ve Tabia Varliklarini Koruma Bolge Kurulu, Conservation of Cultural Heritage Board of Bursa). This specific information concerning Asia Minor settlements, is conducted through an extended research which is part of the ongoing study program titled «Greek Communities Cultural and Ekistics Heritage in Asia Minor (17th- 20th centuries)»⁸. In particular, the content of the research includes the historical and architectural registration and enhancement of Greek settlements in the region of Asia Minor, from the sea of Propontis, all along the A.M. coast, to Lycia territories. The research project aims to fill the gap related to the historical, cultural and ekistics heritage of the Greek communities in Asia Minor. The implementation of this project will substantially contribute to highlight the role of the Greek communities in social, economic and cultural fields.

3. Institutional Framework of human's environmental management and accordance with European and International Context

According to the General Principles of Charter of the International Council on Monuments and Sites⁹, the term "heritage" in its wide sense includes both natural and cultural

⁷ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/356> [access 29/5/2012]

⁸ The research project (2010-today) is being conducted under the scientific supervision and coordination of Dr Eleni G. Gavra, Assistant Professor, University of Western Macedonia, Department of Balkan Studies, Florina Greece and Dr Michailidis D. Iakovos, Assistant Professor Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH), History Department, Thessaloniki, Greece. The team comprises also of the researchers: Vasilis Dimitriadis, historian, PhD candidate AUTH, Charalambos Minaoglou, historian, PhD candidate Athens University, Panos Zaxaros, architect AUTH, Anastasia Bourlidou, architect AUTH, Master in Landscape Architecture AUTH and Kleri Gkioufi, architect AUTH, Master in Urban Planning UTH.

⁹ www.international.icomos.org [access 29/5/2012]

environment. In this scenery there are included also, historic sites, locations and built environment and biodiversity, collections, past and continuing cultural practices, knowledge and living experiences. Historical development is recorded and displayed along the course of cultural heritage, and this legacy basically shapes the identity of every nation, country, region or place and therefore is an integral part of modern life. It is a dynamic reference point and a positive average mean of growth and change. The particular heritage and collective memory of each region or community is irreplaceable and an important foundation for current and future development. In the article 5 of the practices of the conference of UNESCO¹⁰ (1972) there is noted that in order to ensure effective and active measures for the protection, preservation and promotion of cultural and natural heritage, each state tries, as part of this contract, to adopt a general policy. Specifically, appropriate legal, scientific, technical, administrative and economic measures are required, like the creation and development of national and regional training centers. The establishment of such services and development of scientific and engineering research are the criteria for effective implementation. In the same context, targets the European Commission (2010) which encourages Member States towards a common vision of cooperation and coordination. This context includes actions to identify and exchange information on relevant national programs and research activities to establish and implement a common strategic research agenda. For these reasons, the collaboration with the Committee is necessary, in order to enhance initiatives on behalf of it and the submission of regular progress reports to it.

The institutional protection framework of monuments in Turkey

Turkey today, regarding the institutional framework for the protection of monuments, is bound by the provisions of the Hague Convention (1954), Paris (1972) and Granada (1985), was having ratified these conventions¹¹. In terms of a national framework applies the law 2863/21.07.1983, revised by the laws 3386/17.06.1987 and 5226/2004 "Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage"¹². Under the provisions of this Act, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Turkish Republic is responsible for the registration and protection of cultural monuments located within the country. The registration of monuments is in accordance with

¹⁰ UNESCO, 1972, *Convention concerning the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage*, Paris, available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/convention-en.pdf> [access 20/6/2012]

¹¹ Voudouri D., Strati A., 1999, *The Protection of Cultural Heritage in International and European level*, Publications Antoniou Sakkoula, Athens-Komotini, pp. 36, 74, 247

¹² Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2012, KÜLTÜR VE TURİZM BAKANLIĞI, www.kultur.gov.tr. [access 24/4/2012]

their nature. Thus, the monuments are either in the General Directorate of foundations, mosques and mausoleums or the General Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museums. Both of them are under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkish Republic. This law defines as first and highest priority the protection of monuments, identifying them as cultural property assets, as well as part of cultural heritage, and ends up in the conduct of measures need to be taken for their protection.

Turkey is a global example of cultural diversity due to its environment, so the responsibility for the protection and preservation of cultural heritage is urgent. The basic laws concerning the protection coincide with periods of political and economical change, and recently, significant steps have been made towards a direction in harmonization with the European standards. Furthermore, Turkey's participation in international organizations has its role, taking into consideration that Turkey has signed the Convention for the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage of UNESCO (1983), and has adopted the European Convention for the Conservation of Architectural Heritage (1985) and Treaty on the Protection of the Mediterranean.

Protection policies are implemented with the cooperation of competent organizations. For example, there are specific cities such as Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara, Bursa and Antalya, which have benefited from the cooperation of municipalities and agencies of the Ministries of Culture and Tourism, the Ministry of Forestry and the Ministry of Environment, Urban and Regional Planning. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism deals with issues relating to conservation of cultural heritage, while the Ministry of Environment and Forestry undertakes matters that have to do with nature conservation, national parks and specially protected areas¹³.

Today, apart from the official unions, there are involved, usually on a smaller scale, NGOs, such as the Association of Historic Cities, Environment Volunteers (Çevgön) and many others. But compared to European standards, Turkey has no national or regional training centers. The difficulties identified in the management of the protected areas are due to complexity of actions, lack of financial resources and appropriate services. According to the Council of Europe, it is essential to adopt implementation schedules, combined with the participation of international organizations, informing and enabling the public. Additionally,

¹³ Stamatelos K., 2011, *Recording and discussion of the institutional framework and policies for the management of cultural / architectural heritage in Turkey*, Master Program "Studies in language and culture of Southeast Europe", University of Western Macedonia Department of Balkan Studies, Florina , p.11-12

the establishment of a development plan by the Turkish National Committee of UNESCO is in progress in order to highlight areas of interest¹⁴.

It is worth mentioning the "South East Program" (GAP), a model project of regional and local development under the National Environmental Action Plan of Turkey. The project includes reconstruction operations, rescue and promotion of cultural heritage combined with the cooperation and participation of agencies, organizations and individuals, with a focus on sustainability¹⁵.



Figure: Monumental (ekistics, cultural) heritage in modern Turkey

4. Touristic promotional strategies and perspectives

The value of cultural tourism is a national strategy that sets as a priority the promotion of Turkey through cultural values, and generates significant economic benefits. In this context, the promotion of cultural heritage is encouraged at all levels from the government, NGOs, local communities and agencies. Posts on cultural heritage are transmitted through documents, videos and web publications.

The cultural heritage as a touristic product is an important part of tourism in general. Today, special tours are organized by local tour operators for target groups of various interests. Points of interest are religious references, mythological destinations (e.g. ancient city of Troy, the

¹⁴ www.unesco.org/culture [access 29/5/2012]

¹⁵ South East Program: <http://www.gap.gov.tr> [access 29/5/2012]

city of legends), historical cultural routes (e.g. route of ancient Lycia, the apostolic route of St. Paul, the Silk Road etc.), buildings of a particular architectural period and specific morphology.

In general, the Turkish state, as mentioned above, has an adequate institutional framework for the protection and promotion of heritage. Sustainability can be derived through the establishment and activation of joint and scientific cooperation of, mostly, NGOs and other scientific, technical, trade associations (e.g. ICOMOS, Chambers etc). These efforts, when they are part of transnational research projects, in fact, could lead to the formulation of management policies. The prospect of these proposals could be extended to other similar network of international cooperation in cultural heritage issues of common interest and general issues in development strategies in "relative sites"¹⁶.

On the other hand, there cannot be omitted the fact that Turkey in recent years "uses" the cultural heritage in order to achieve specific political ends. An example of such action is the case of the ongoing operation of the Holy Monastery of Panagia Sumela on August 15, 2010. Despite the fact that it could be considered as recognition of religious rights of Christian minority, with positive impressions about Turkey, the contribution to the tourism-economic sector is not inconsiderable. Furthermore, considering the "neo-Ottoman" orientation of modern foreign policy is directly perceived as a need for restoration and display of Ottoman monuments mainly in the Balkans¹⁷.

We underline that the efforts for the sustainable management of Greek's monumental heritage beyond Greek borders, as in the case of Turkey, should be promoted bilaterally. The following contribute towards this direction:

- a / the correct knowledge of space (historical and geographical),
- b/ the registration of "spots" and areas of interest and reference,
- c/ a "shared" scientific planning of interventions,
- d/ a realistic search and application of planning scenarios,
- e/ an approach, mostly from our side, meaning Greek's and external support mechanisms, depending on the objective.

¹⁶ Gavra E.G., 2003, *Cultural and architectural heritage in the Balkans. Management in the context of European integration*, Publications Kyriakidis, Thessaloniki

¹⁷ Stamatelos K., 2011, *Recording and discussion of the institutional framework and policies for the management of cultural / architectural heritage in Turkey*, Master Program "Studies in language and culture of Southeast Europe", University of Western Macedonia Department of Balkan Studies, Florina , p.11-12

Assuming even that memory is preserved not only intact, but also through integrated processes of redesign and reconstruction, specific actions are proposed:

- Support, in every way, of scientific registration,
- Integrated design of feasible scenarios for the reference space,
- Implementation of model (pilot) scale interventions in places of public choice and transnational agreement.

Most importantly, it is necessary to develop a national policy of historic and cultural self-awareness and promotion of Greek's culture and the coordination of various serious efforts that already exist.

It remains to be seen that cultural heritage is a key factor for the promotion of touristic product and especially cultural tourism. Particularly, the value of the Greek's heritage contributes towards this direction, generating significant benefits in terms of culture and economy. Therefore, the strengthening of the Greek image is intentional from the side of the state and private initiative in terms of tourist organizations.

Specifying the above, we suggest, firstly, a series of proposals relating to the promotion of cultural tourism-in institutional and design level:

- Declaration of monuments and historical sites, settlements of Greek interest and reference into World Cultural Heritage Monuments. Adoption of international important decrees in protecting historic wealth in areas with extensive and intensive tourism activity.
- Expansion of the national list of historic monuments and settlements (identification and display of a design framework of their historical identity).
- Promotion of financial implementation programs.
- Direct cooperation of multiple state and non-state factors (ministries, universities, private corporations, professions, etc.) while removal of bureaucratic constraints.
- Notice of architectural competitions of international scope in order to highlight these within a framework of promoting quality tourism, non-commercialized.

There are also recommended:

a/on urban level:

- separation of residential areas, commerce, tourism, industry, and extensions of these, declared historical-archaeological sites, special treatments at the boundaries within the zones and areas of historical tourism, trade, protection of those in intermediate zones (buffer zones)

b/on architectural design / landscape architecture level:

- integration of declared historical buildings in historical settlements, green buffer zones, architectural interventions in history and building facades, with the aim of including them in a mild touristic frame.

We state that the implementation of these proposals involves the direct cooperation of bilateral or international and non-state factors (NGOs, academic institutions, private companies, associations of the professions, etc.) by signing the relevant agenda. At this extent, we believe that support and joint research projects of bilateral interest contribute in promotion of cooperation with Turkey as well as the notice or architectural competitions of international repute (the ongoing research program «Greek Communities Cultural and Ekistics Heritage in Asia Minor (17th-20th centuries) », the current research collaboration of Ecumenical Patriarchate and Aristotle University of Thessaloniki for building restoration and renovation of Halki's School, the oldest research program of the NTUA "Urban - Architecture and Photographic Survey of the settlement elements of the Greeks in Istanbul").

Within these perspectives, programs are developed through tourism promotion tracks such as religious, historical and cultural, aiming at the enhancement of the touristic and cultural heritage.

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