

HISTORICAL MEMORY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT WITHIN AN URBAN CULTURAL LANDSCAPE. THE CASE OF THE OLD MUNICIPAL HOSPITAL OF THE UPPER TOWN OF PATRAS (OLD PATRAS).

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Abstract

The dominant objective of a modern state is the achievement of development in the three productive sectors of the Gross Domestic Product: primary (production of raw materials), secondary (processing of raw materials) and tertiary (providing services). Basic parameters of development are social processes and practices, interpersonal communication, economic, political and cultural partnerships, as well as active strategic management policies. Development is a “whole” that requires “total quality management” in order to be properly managed, protected and promoted. The management of cultural heritage and cultural tourism must take into account and pursue “sustainable development”, which meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Appropriate, feasible and effective cultural management promotes economic, social, cultural and environmental sustainability in a national and local context. The Old Municipal Hospital in the Upper Town area of Patras (Old Patras) is a tangible example of the utilization and promotion of the local cultural capital through the process of its reuse and return to society. Being characterized as a “newer monument” by the Ministry of Culture, it receives permanent protection and cultural exploitation.

Keywords: *development, sustainability, historical memory, place-landscape, Upper Town area of Patras, Old Municipal Hospital.*

Introduction

The paper focuses on the concept and importance of cultural heritage and sustainable urban development as pillars of an effective cultural policy. It also examines the role of local organizations with cultural action, which -through their principles, objectives, policies and actions- save and promote cultural heritage, but also design urban sustainability programs. The case study investigates the historical physiognomy, use, management and development perspective of the Old Municipal Hospital of Patras as a monument-landmark of the Upper Town area of Patras in relation to the sustainable development and promotion of the historical urban area in question.

Definition and characteristics of “development”, “sustainability” and “landscape”

The main objective of a modern state is to achieve development in the three productive sectors of the Gross Domestic Product: primary (production of raw materials), secondary (processing of raw materials) and tertiary (provision of services). “Development” is defined as a better balance of social and human relations and systems of land use, production, employment, distribution and consumption, in accordance with the values and choices of the

forces in power, as they militantly coexist and interact in the natural environment, with the specific social dynamics and the average social consciousness (Pόκος 2001). One understands that development parameters are created by social processes and practices, interpersonal communication, economic, political and cultural partnerships, as well as active strategic management policies. Development is a “whole” that requires “total quality management” in order to be properly managed, protected and promoted. “Total quality management” is defined as the modern management philosophy for improving the quality and effectiveness of organizations by systematically considering planning, administration, organization, strategy, interaction and evaluation at each stage of development of goods (products and services) (Δερβιτσιώτη 1993).

The management of cultural heritage and cultural tourism must seek “sustainable development”, while it can also be rendered as “supportable development” (Ανδριώτης 2008, 38). According to the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) (1987, 43) “sustainable development is that which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is a process of transformation, where the exploitation of wealth-producing resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and the adjustments to the institutional framework are harmonized and elevate the current and future possibilities, in order to satisfy human needs and aspirations”.

The European Union of Historic Cities and Regions is also based on the previous definition of sustainable development through the “Guidelines for Sustainable Cultural Tourism in Historic Towns and Regions” (European Association of Historic Towns and Cities 2009, 1). The Association highlights the need for cultural tourism to respect cultural and natural heritage, to promote cultural exchanges between people, to inspire intercultural dialogue and to create spatial investments and jobs for all productive social groups. Additionally, it is recognized that the essence of the concept of “sustainability” must take into account the following factors: a. Visitors (the satisfaction of their needs, expectations and in general their quality stay in the reception areas), b. Businesses (the safeguarding of the need for small, medium and large tourism businesses to be profitable and long-lasting by offering authentic experiences to their visitors), c. Local Communities (the respect for their values, needs and overall quality of life, so that local identities are maintained and authentic local cultural assets are protected), d. Environment (the effort to protect and preserve the cultural and natural environment, local peculiarities and the image-feeling of each place-landscape). In fact, in the new “Guidelines for Sustainable Cultural Tourism”, in addition to the concept of “sustainability”, the concept of “resilience” has also been provided for, which is defined as “the ability of cultural tourism to recover from situations of challenges and crises”, such as the Covid-19 pandemic (European Association of Historic Towns and Regions 2009, 9• <http://www.historic-towns.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Guidelines-for-Sustainable-Cultural-Tourism-2020-1.pdf>).

In the Greek legislative framework, Law 4447/2016 (Chapter A, Article 1) defines the concept and characteristics of “sustainable development” as follows: “sustainable development is development that combines social, economic and environmental objectives with the aim of: a. achieving sustainable economic growth by creating a strong productive base and emphasizing innovation and increasing employment, b. territorial and social cohesion, fair distribution of resources and lifting exclusions, c. protection of the natural and cultural environment, biodiversity, landscape and the sustainable use of natural resources”. Regarding the first pillar, economic sustainability, it is envisaged to spread the economic positive effects to all productive classes, to strengthen economic stability and to upgrade the role of the “creative economy” through the efficiency of economic figures and changes in the way of thinking and acting for the benefit of the quality of life (Florida 2008).

The modern concept of sustainable development could become “integrated” with: a. understanding the dynamic and indivisible wholeness of nature, society and culture, b. interpreting and evaluating development as quality of life within the structured and unstructured environment, in which man actively participates as a subject and accepts the results of his interventions as an object of development. “Empathy” as self-awareness and other-awareness, as well as the collective production process, create economic, technological, social, cultural and environmental progress. The culmination of the concept, essence, characteristics, principles, goals and implementation practices of “sustainable development”, as well as a model for establishing sustainability rules, is the United Nations, which in 2015 adopted the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” with the establishment of 17 ambitious global goals. UNESCO also played an active role in this event, determining that sustainable development is not understood if it is not implemented by people for people. The 17 goals include the following (UN 2015, 14):

1. Eradicate poverty
2. Eradicate hunger
3. Ensure good health and well-being
4. Ensure quality education
5. Achieve gender equality
6. Ensure clean water and sanitation
7. Ensure affordable and clean energy
8. Ensure decent work and economic growth
9. Ensure innovation and industrial infrastructure
10. Achieve social inclusion
11. Ensure sustainable cities and communities
12. Ensure responsible consumption and production
13. Achieve climate action
14. Achieve life below sea
15. Achieve life on land
16. Achieve peace, justice and strong institutions
17. Achieve partnerships for the goals.

Specifically for “Culture”, UNESCO confirms that its role will be recognized in most of the above goals, extending from cultural heritage to contemporary culture and cultural and creative industries. Culture is the animating and guiding factor of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Goal No. 11 places the cultural dimension of sustainability within urban development by protecting and promoting urban cultural heritage worldwide. In cities local identities of diverse communities of people are developed and organized, which need to be preserved and promoted, because they promote cultural diversity and intercultural approach through intercultural dialogue. The “city” is a historical, cultural, natural creation, that is, a creation of the partnership of art and nature. The respective strategic and operational development and promotion planning differentiates its image in the globalized “becoming” and generates a competitive advantage over other cities. This national planning must take into account the concept, essence and policy of “landscape”, as it plays an important role of public interest from an economic, social, cultural, ecological and environmental perspective and whose protection and management require special care, contributing to the creation of jobs and promoting creativity and innovation. One understands, therefore, that a simple geographically defined place or space, natural or urban, unstructured or structured, becomes a “landscape” when “it is shaped in such a way that building structures and natural elements are combined in order to cover in a complex way all social requirements” (Μωπαρτης 2016, 30). Therefore, the landscape is characterized by functional and aesthetic harmony, by cultural, historical and natural demarcation, as well as by the

development of economic and social activities. Thus, the simple place-space as a geographical dimension or physical surface is organized into an intentional multidisciplinary unity in structure and content, acquiring “cognitive, material and emotional contexts [...], which are susceptible to transformation and change” (Tilley 1994, στοΓιαλούρη (επιμ.) 2017, 219). According to this approach, the urban place, the city and urban areas should be considered as the “place of place(s)”, as multifunctional human activity develops and is organized in them (Μωραΐτης 2016, 38).

The term “landscape” and its perception composes a meaning-giving system, which is related to statements and connotations, literal and symbolic elements, which generate ideology, identity, culture and coexist within the image of a city or urban area. According to Τερκενλή (1996, 18) “all landscapes are symbolic, that is, expressions of cultural values, social behavior and personal individual action in certain spatial locations, over a period of time. Therefore, cultural landscapes can be considered as repositories/reservoirs of meanings and concepts, originating from the social groups that currently occupy them or occupied them in the past”. They are directly or indirectly linked to the process of memory both at the level of recalling memories of the past and at the level of their practical, functional and symbolic utilization in the environment of the present. In this way, every landscape -natural or anthropogenic, structured or unstructured, referential or symbolic- creates in collective memory the bases for the genesis of identities. The symbiotic societies of every era, whether natural or conventional, were defined racially, linguistically, religiously, culturally, and guild-wise by the characteristics of the place and landscape in which they were part of, which is why they differentiated “us” from “the others”. The determination of local or national identity with its above-mentioned sub-definitions requires the process of memory and, at the same time, its interpretation. The past is transformed into an experience when it is inscribed in the cognitive and interpretive background of the community within a certain and fully understood place-landscape. This view carries the risk of a local-regional determinism, as in the past space and landscape were considered axes of pure racial identity and in complete opposition to the identity of the “other”. Today, however, “[...] the view that considers culture as a means of adapting man to nature in the general context of questioning the “man-nature” dichotomy has been overcome and a holistic approach is being promoted, where culture and environment are treated as parts of a continuum, as inseparable elements of a single process. [...]. These new identities are in no way understood as homogeneous and static, nor as “rooted” in a place, as national ideology wants them to be and as social sciences largely treated them until recently.” (Νιτσιάκος 2003, 28, 97-98). The phenomenon of urbanism-urbanization at the state level and the phenomenon of globalization-transnationality at the transnational level contributed to the relaxation of the strict interconnection of the place-landscape with the pure local or national identity of its inhabitants. Thus, today, we are in a position to say that as a global society we have largely overcome an autopathic, isolating and self-oriented framework, towards a heteropathic-allopathic, socio-universal framework, oriented towards the “other” and the world. The interaction of communities through the contribution of inherent identity elements ensures the continuity and democracy of the landscape. Therefore, according to the anthropologist Geertz (2003, 347-348), “the progress towards humanity -that gradual development of higher intellectual capacities, which Rousseau called “perfectibilite”- was destroyed by cultural provincialism, armed with an immature science. Cultural universalism, armed with a mature science, will set it in motion again”.

The United Nations’ “New Urban Agenda” (2017) envisages the integration of the 17 sustainability goals in the field of cities and urban development policy. Cities today, although they geographically constitute only 2% of the world’s land area, contribute 70% to the Gross Domestic Product, 60% to global energy consumption, 70% to greenhouse gas emissions and 70% to global waste (<https://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/>). From the above data it is

clear that modern cities, with the activities they develop and their spatial planning, must serve development prospects, with the aim of their local, national and international visibility. This is why the collaboration of many “interest groups” (“stakeholders”) involved in urban upgrading, such as public and private services, special scientific groups and local communities, is required, in order to give a special “local color” and to ensure a competitive advantage in the international cultural and tourist scene. A tangible example of creative policy within an urban landscape is the planning of a multifaceted reopening and reuse of the Old Municipal Hospital of Patras.

Old Municipal Hospital of Patras

A. Historical context

It was built in 1857 constituting a remarkable and representative example of neoclassical architecture and a historical urban landmark for both the Upper Town area of Patras and the entire city of Patras. The neoclassical building by the Danish architect Hans Christian Hansen operated as a hospital for 101 years, from 1872 to 1973, while today it is considered a cultural center of the city (<https://www.e-patras.gr/el/axiotheata>). On October 15, 1857, the foundation stone of the building was laid by King Otto in the presence of his wife, Queen Amalia.

The surface area of the site is 3,650m². The plan was drawn up by the Danish architect Hansen. Construction began immediately under mayor Venizelos Roufos and ended in 1871 under mayor Georgios Roufos. Its administrators in turn (and until the beginning of the 20th century) were: I. Giannopoulos, Th. Efstathopoulos, K. Papastathopoulos, H. Koryllos. The latter, taking over the administration in 1890, excavated the basement of the building and installed the pharmacy, outpatient clinics, kitchens and warehouses there. During the Balkan Wars and World War I, the hospital treated soldiers, while during World War II it was occupied by the Italians and the Germans (Τριανταφύλλου 1980, 269). During the first decades of its operation it had a surgical, pathological, obstetric and radiological department, while it had a microbiological laboratory and an autopsy room. Within the premises a church of St. Charalambos was built in 1914, on whose image many vows were hung. Until 1958 it operated under the supervision of the Municipality, when it was nationalized. It is the third oldest hospital in Greece after those of Nafplio and Athens.

The monumental identity of the declared modern monument of the Old Municipal Hospital of Patras, according to the Ministry of Culture, is the following (http://listedmonuments.culture.gr/monument_print.php?code=2545) •
https://www.arxaiologikoktimatologio.gov.gr/el/monuments_info?id=157636&type=Monument:

Monument Identity

Monument Name

Building complex of the Old Municipal Hospital of Patras on Panagouli, Papadiamantopoulou, Koryllou streets and Koryllou square in Patras, prop. of the Municipality of Patras

Prefecture / Municipality / District / Settlement

ACHAIAS / PATREON / PATREON / Patras

Location

Panagouli, Papadiamantopoulou, Koryllou Streets and Koryllou Square

Type of Declaration

Newer Monument

Type of Monument

Urban Buildings, Public Utility Buildings

Time Period

Modern Hellenic

Ancient/Historical Name

Protection

Protection Body, Headquarters of the Protection Body

YNMTE of Western Greece, Patras

Ownership Status

Local Government

Proclaims

Ministerial Decision Number

Ministry of Culture and Tourism/DILAP/G/4600/6544/3-2-1998

Official Gazette Number

Government Gazette 164/B/25-2-1998

B. Development and sustainable perspective interventions

It consists of building complexes, which have been constructed in six different time periods from 1871 to 1934. The actions and projects concern the exploitation of the cultural heritage through the use of new technologies and the development of a digital strategy for the tourist promotion and promotion of Patras. Through reuse the space will be able to function as a lever for the development of the region at the historical, social, cultural, educational and economic levels, but also contribute to the development of thematic tourism. The core of the actions includes the creation of a permanent structure for the collection, preservation, study, documentation, digitization, projection and promotion of the Audiovisual Heritage of the city and the wider region of Achaia, in order to promote the preservation of the memory of the cultural evolution of the region (Δήμος Πατρών 2016, 178-180). The new zoning of the building's functions provides for the following uses (Δήμος Πατρών 2017^a, 1-2• Δήμος Πατρών 2017^b):

- ✓ the ground floor western part of the Hansen wing remains as a space for periodic exhibitions and activities,
- ✓ in the corresponding underground western part of the same wing, instead of the Medical Museum, artistic creation workshops and offices are located,
- ✓ the eastern underground and ground floor part of the Hansen wing and the eastern and northern wings of the complex are transformed into a Digital Audiovisual Heritage Center of the city,
- ✓ in the northwestern wing the dining area remains and is expanded into the elevated two-story building of the western wing with the function of a café-restaurant,
- ✓ the ground floor hall of the western wing is formed into a small conference center with multiple uses combined with the other spaces,
- ✓ auxiliary spaces, administrative offices and other supporting functions are provided in the remaining spaces of the building complex.

More specifically, the Digital Audiovisual Heritage Center will focus on aspects of the cultural evolution and history of the city and the wider region, as they have been captured in various forms and various material carriers of audiovisual records, namely moving images, photography and sound recordings. It will have the following structures organized in the respective spaces, as reflected in the architectural plans (Δήμος Πατρών 2016, 180-18• Δήμος Πατρών 2017^a, 3-4):

- a) Exhibition Space: a versatile exhibition space with the greatest possible flexibility in terms of its conversion possibilities depending on the needs of each exhibition.

- b) Archive Space: a repository of the city's memory with conservation laboratories and storage areas for documents under the appropriate conditions.
- c) Digitization Space: digitization of the center's collections and any other archival documents with which they will be enriched, in accordance with technological standards and best international practices.
- d) Research and Documentation Area: organization, maintenance, classification of materials that have already been recorded, as well as detection of any relevant material that is missing from the research. The area will function as a hub for attracting and gathering archival documents. Furthermore, as an autonomous research unit, it will be able to gradually expand its activities to the primary creation of audiovisual documents, which will contribute to the recording of the history and development of the city and the wider region.
- e) Study Area: in this, researchers, students, pupils, citizens and any other interested party will be able to have open access to all the documents. The possible interconnection of the relevant computer systems with the data of the Municipal Library of Patras and the Library of the University of Patras will offer multiplier benefits.

The indicative budget for the project and the individual actions amounts to €5,000,000, while the target groups benefiting include 214,000 residents of the city of Patras and 50,000 annual visitors. The Beneficiary and Operating Body is the Municipality of Patras.

Indicative actions and events for the utilization and reuse of the space are the following:

1. During the 2019-2020 school year, the Cultural Organization of the Municipality of Patras, in collaboration with the Department of Secondary Education of Achaia, organized an educational program at the Folk Art Museum for students of Primary and Secondary Education. The Museum was inaugurated on June 20, 2013 and is housed in the Hansen Hall of the Old Municipal Hospital of Patras. The Museum's archival material is composed of various sections, which document a significant part of the cultural heritage of the region with collections relating to:

- ✓ the cultivation of the land and the making of bread,
- ✓ the cultivation of vines, the making of wine and tsipouro,
- ✓ livestock farming,
- ✓ household items,
- ✓ the processing of wool and weaving with a traditional loom,
- ✓ the presentation of material from traditional weaving, printing, hat making, wax making, shoemaking workshops.

According to the educational program the Museum welcomes students every Tuesday and Thursday from October 15, 2019, during the morning hours, with organized tours for groups of students up to 25 people together with accompanying teachers. For the proper planning of the action, an application for participation from each school is attached and telephone contact with the program manager from the Municipality is provided (Δήμος Πατρέων 2019• Δ/νση Δ/θμιας Εκπ/σης Αχαΐας 2019, 1-2).

2. On August 22, 2021, in the atrium of the Old Municipal Hospital of Patras, the award-winning classical guitarist and composer Panagiotis Margaritis presented his new musical performance entitled "Prelude to Love" with pieces-arrangements of wonderful musical compositions by Ennio Morricone, Nino Rota, Mikis Theodorakis, Manos Hadjidakis, Sting, Beatles, Rolling Stones and himself. The performance was part of the events under the title "Full Moon Days", dedicated to the full moon of August. The "Prelude to Love" marks an artistic mysticism full of notes and tones, a beautiful and timeless journey towards the soul, passion, love, inner turmoil, peace and emotional integration (<https://pelop.gr/patra-meres-panselinou-me-ton-p-margari/>). Admission was free for the public and this proves both the

social sensitivity of the Municipality and the need for cultural and spiritual cultivation of the citizens.

3. Within the framework of its responsibilities the Cultural Organization of the Municipality of Patras organizes the "International Patras Festival" every summer with the aim of "cultivating the soul and the mind, which gives new impetus and depth to the daily struggle of citizens" (http://www.patrasculture.gr/?section=1917&language=el_GR). The atrium of the Old Municipal Hospital of Patras was used for the performance of the Association - Choir "Anticho" with the title "Three Composers in the Hospital" on September 18 and 19, 2021, at 21:30 (http://www.patrasculture.gr/managed_images/diethens-festival-patras-2021-programma.pdf). The work was inspired by the world of hospitals, which, especially in the era of the pandemic, has highlighted them as places of continuous struggle, where the full range of human emotions unfolds. The texts, that were selected, approached this broad thematic axis in different ways with an emphasis on human pain and healing. Poems by Vizyenos, Souris, Livaditis, Varveris, Kosmopoulos, Brecht, Markopoulos, Karellis, etc. were heard. Special mention was made of the Hospital and its place in the history of the city (<https://gnomip.gr/2021/09/15/treis-sunthetes-sto-nosokomeio/>).

4. Additionally, for the 77th anniversary of the liberation of Patras from the German occupation troops, the Cultural Organization of the Municipality organized the screening of the 2017 documentary film "Hitler vs. Picasso" in the atrium of the Hospital on October 6, 2021, at 20:30. This is a landmark film, as it reveals works of art hidden, looted, condemned by the Nazis, which come to light by projecting on the big screen the Nazi obsession with "degenerate art", as they characterized it, which was banned, expelled and condemned. The Italian actor Toni Servillo tells the true story of such artistic masterpieces by Picasso, Matisse, Renoir, Chagall, etc. (https://www.patrasculture.gr/?section=637&page1552=2&language=el_GR&itemid1541=4436&detail1541=1).

Conclusions

The scope and variety of the previous projects and actions demonstrate, on the one hand, the effort of local bodies for holistic cultural management and cultivation, and on the other hand, the need and desire of the people of Patras to get to know the cultural-historical sites and to engage in a fruitful "discussion" with them, creatively experiencing the cultural and artistic events. The financial contribution of both the local community and visitors from neighboring municipalities or other cities is also considered a positive impact, which upgrades the image of the Upper Town area of Patras and contributes to the improvement of its infrastructure. In any case, more fruitful and effective partnerships between local bodies and with the local community are required, an effort to complete the regeneration projects within a specific time frame, but also a more intense communication initiative and promotion through the printed and electronic press at local, regional, national and international level.

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