STUDYING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE REGIONAL FRAME OF LAND-PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH OF CENTRAL MACEDONIA REGION FOR THE CULTURAL HERITAGE

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ABSTRACT

The examined Region of Central Macedonia presents a particularly rich cultural heritage, which, chronologically, covers all phases of the Hellenic culture starting from the ancient to modern times. It is common knowledge that Greece is one of the most important historical places with a great background of monuments and creations which are admired, acknowledged and worthily analyzed so much for the way and quality of their construction as for their ability to survive in such a good condition during the centuries. During the development of this study archeological, byzantine and ottoman monuments, historical centers, traditional settlements and newer built-up and monumental environment were distinguished and examined.

For the achievement of this objective and the, as complete as possible, approach of the subject, the study was developed based on each of the individual objectives that are presented in the frame of land-planning and sustainable growth for the protection and the appointment of the cultural regions. These objectives are the following five:

1. The appointment of Thessaloniki as the Balkan Centre of Culture and Sciences
2. The protection and appointment of the archaeological, byzantine and ottoman monumental heritage
3. The appointment the newer interesting built-up and monumental reserve
4. The reinforcement of the modern cultural infrastructures and regulations
5. The composition of the actions related to culture-tourism and the protection of the environment

The aim of this presented study is, firstly, the appointment of the cultural heritage and the way by which it influences and changes, positively or negatively, the economic growth of the region of Central Macedonia and, secondly, the assessment of effectiveness of the upper mentioned objectives and the acts of concretization and sufficiency of legislative protection for the cultural commodities. The question of whether the legislation and its application is complete and enough to cover all challenges and solve all problems connected to the historical heritage is a commonly discussed subject in Greece as it is a necessity for all citizens and governments.

As a general conclusion, it is clear that the application of regulating policy of land uses is essentially connected with the development process and must be crucially intensive. Therefore, it is concluded that there is a great need for the creation of specially formed land planning studies, with the legislated land uses especially on the units which need a careful protection due to their natural and cultural environment, the appointment and completion of their characterization and the establishment of special terms and laws for the construction and protection of the traditional settlements, the newer built-up and monumental environment of particular interest. It must not be forgotten that the cultural heritage of a country is the credential of its existence and the base of education for the young.

INTRODUCTION

The Mediterranean Basin is the richest and most important area of cultural heritage. Italy, Egypt, Greece and the majority of the “coastal” countries have a variety of cultural sites to pride for. Although their protection and conservation has been a primal goal for the European governments (Granada, 1985 [1]), a lot of examples prove the opposite.

The study area of this essay is the Region of Central Macedonia. This region is known for its important natural ecosystems and cultural sites. Central Macedonia’s cultural heritage is highly rich covering every era of the Greek cultural development, dating back from the Paleolithic era to today.

The archaeological, byzantine and ottoman cultural heritage can be easily outlined by a specially created database. On the other hand, due to the fact that the election and revelation of the newer historical areas in addition to the protection of the natural environment constitute the basic natural and economical resources of the region, it becomes clear that their management and organization in networks of tourism and recreation is crucial. Central Macedonia is, also, characterized by the variety of its traditional villages mostly found on mountain areas. Facing problems as demographic decrease, these villages are unfortunately underestimated increasing the risks of abundance and, therefore, distraction of their cultural and natural environment.[2]

This study aims at the presentation of the cultural heritage and the discussion on the efficiency of the measures taken towards their protection and exploitation in a sustainable way.

EXPERIMENTAL
The current study is based on the content of scientific articles, institutional laws and information from the Hellenic ministry of Culture. However, the basic text is the Regional frame of land-planning and sustainable growth for Central Macedonia, which is examined and analyzed in detail. Its data for the Region’s cultural heritage have been separated and complemented with the pre-mentioned sources.

Firstly, the study and the creation of a database of the places of cultural interest was undertaken after the analysis of the current status of the Region, according to the frame of land-planning and sustainable growth, and the examination of the information of the Ministry of Culture and certain scientific articles. These data are both quantitative and qualitative presented by the aid of charts and specially created maps. The basic chapter of this study is the examination of the efficiency of the current protection and viable exploitation politics. The appointment of the cultural areas and the increase of their economic contribution through tourism to Greece’s economy are the properly set goals. But are the special objectives of the Regional frame of land-planning and sustainable growth enough, sufficient and effective?

Lastly, at the same time, the combination of the examination of the Regional frame and the Greek institutional laws (1126/81, 1127/81, 1650/86, 3028/02, 3658/08) for the cultural heritage have provided the opportunity to accomplish a complete and objective view of the current status towards the protection of such important historical places. It is highly important to mention that the law 1126/81 is the law by which the International Treaty for the Protection of the international cultural and natural heritage, signed in Paris in 1972, was introduced to the Greek law. Also, the law 1127/81 is the one by which the European Treaty for the protection of the archaeological heritage, signed in London in 1969, was introduced to the Greek law. On the other hand, the law 1650/86 contributes to the protection of the cultural heritage indirectly through certain measures for the protection of the environment generally.

To begin with and for a better acknowledgement of the identity of the historical heritage, definitions of each area of historical interest are given according to Greek institutional laws.

According to the above institutional laws:

**Cultural commodities:** The evidence of the human existence and the individual and collective human activity.

**Monuments:** Every piece of the cultural heritage which constitute material evidence and belong to the cultural heritage of the country in which they are found and are compelled to be specially protected according to the following distinction:

- **Ancient monuments** are all cultural sites dated from the prehistoric, byzantine and after byzantine times until 1830. This category includes among others caves and paleontological remnants for which there is evidence that they are connected to the human existence.
- **Newer (or modern) monuments** are considered to be all cultural sites dated after 1830, the protection of which is compelled due to their historic, artistic or scientific importance.
- **Non-movable (or stable) monuments:** This category includes the monuments that have been connected to the ground and remain to be so or to the bottom of the sea/lake/river and cannot be moved without damaging their value. Parts of this category are the creations, fractures, decorations, environment and other elements which constitute inseparable parts of the monuments.
- **Movable monuments:** The monuments not considered to be in the non-movable category.
Archaeological sites: The land, costal, riparian or underwater areas in which there are signs of ancient monuments or signs that these areas used to constitute monumental, built-up or burial areas dated from the ancient times up to 1830. The archaeological sites, also, include the necessary surrounding environment which allows them to compose historical, aesthetical and functional unities.

Historical sites: The land, costal, riparian or underwater areas in which there are signs of excellent historical or mythical incidents or signs of monuments or human and nature projects dated before 1830, which conclude homogeneous areas that can be defined topographic and which need to be protected due to their folklore, ethnic, social, technical, architectural, industrial, historical, artistic or scientific importance.

Intangible cultural commodities: The expressions, activities, knowledge and information, such as legends, traditions, verbal traditions, dances, music, songs, abilities or techniques which constitute evidence of the traditional and intellectual civilization. [3]

The protection of these sites constitutes a combination of acts. These acts are the following:
- The detection, research, categorization, substantiation and study of the elements of protection.
- The preservation and the averting of distraction, alteration and generally every direct or indirect damage of the protected elements.
- The averting of illegal excavation, theft and illegal export.
- The maintenance and, in certain cases, the necessary restoration.
- The facilitating of the public’s access and communication with the acts towards the protection.
- The erection and the insertion of the acts towards protection in the modern social life.
- The education and the sensitization of the public towards the need to protect the cultural heritage.

The protection of the cultural heritage is included in the objectives of every plan or frame regardless of the level of the design, land-planning, developing projects, city planning, and environmental protection. [3], [4], [5], [6]

This protection does not exclude any form of exploitation if it is carried out in a sustainable way. This fact is proven by the International Cultural Tourism Charter which promotes the cultural tourism not only verbally but by creating this Charter and setting certain objectives. The culture’s impact to tourism is underlined in this text, pointing out that the achievement of a beneficial cultural-touristic interaction between the potentially conflicting expectations and aspirations of visitors or local communities presents many challenges and opportunities. The encouragement of the public and private participation both in the protection and exploitation of the cultural heritage and the promotion of cultural tourism are the two major objectives of the International Cultural Tourism Chapter. [7]

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Monuments
In the Region of Central Macedonia there are a lot of important monuments in national European and international level. In the Prefecture of Imathia, the most important monument is Vergina, in the prefecture of Pieria is Dion and in the Prefecture of Pella are ancient Pella and the Macedonian
graves. Furthermore, churches and temples mainly from the Byzantine era are found all over the Region. [8]

**Museums**
Numerous museums which contain exhibits from Ancient, Macedonian and Byzantine era can be found in the Region. In addition, in the capital of the Region, Thessaloniki, modern museums are found, such as the museum of Cinema and the Macedonian museum of Modern Art.[9]

**Archaeological sites**
The most important archaeological sites are found in the Prefecture of Imathia (Aiges), in the Prefecture of Pella (Ancient Pella), in the Prefecture of Pieria (Dion) and in the Prefecture of Thessaloniki (Ancient Thessaloniki).[10]

**Traditional villages - settlements**
The traditional villages are numerous in the Region showing the very important historical background in all Prefectures. [11]

**Map 1: Cultural commodities of Central Macedonia’s Region**

**Cultural roads**
Cultural roads are networks which are shaped by the relations between cities, in which archaeological sites, places of natural beauty and cultural events take place. This network is very important for tourism as the visitor has the opportunity to travel on foot.
The Regional frame refers to the networks of nature and culture. The areas of Central Macedonia that can be organized in such units are the protected areas of the National park of Olympus, the wetlands of the Axios’, Loydia’s and Aliakmona’s rivers, the Salt-pans of Kitroys in Pieria and the lakes Volvi, Korwnia (Lagkadas), and Kerkini. Furthermore, in this category, areas that have been characterized for their particular natural beauty are included (Olympus, Pieria, Vergina-Palatitsia, Loggos-Edessa-plain of Edessa, Agio Oros), but, also, forestall ecosystems on mountains in which, at the same time, the traditional villages and the archaeological places are incorporated. The term "cultural roads" encompasses "networks" or "streets", such as the archaeological sites’ networks, the networks of local production of products (p.h. the "paths of Wine"), the networks of traditional settlements and other networks of cultural infrastructures.

For example "Wine Roads" were created by the members of the Union of Wine producers of Vineyard in North Greece. They are supported by the Community’s initiative LEADER II. They search for solutions to agricultural problems with the active participation of the local government, the cultural associations, various institutions, enterprises and the local population.[12]

**Cultural heritage of Unesco**

From 1981, Greece has signed the Unesco Treaty for the protection of the monuments and sites of international importance, aiming at their protection from every kind of damage or distraction so as these important historical sites are preserved for the next generations.

According to this Treaty:

**Monuments:** They are the architectural pieces, the monumental pieces of sculpture and painting, the elements and structures of archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave inscriptions and their combination which have exceptional scientific, historical and artistic importance.

**Group of buildings:** Groups of separate or connected buildings which, due to their architecture and the place they are in, have exceptional scientific, historical and artistic importance.

**Regions:** Human constructions or combinations of human and natural environment and regions which include archaeological sites and have exceptional scientific, historical and artistic importance.

Unesco has formed certain *Operational Guidelines* according to which elements of cultural heritage are included in the *World Heritage List*. This list includes the categories of cultural heritage: Hominid Sites, Industrial Sites, Cultural Landscapes, Rock-Art Sites and Historic Cities and Towns. Lastly, there are certain areas which are not included to one of the above categories, but constitute a separate group, the Mixed Natural and Cultural Properties.

In Central Macedonia’s Region, there are tree cultural elements in the World heritage list of Unesco: Athos-The Holy mountain in Chalkidiki, Christian and Byzantine Monuments in Thessaloniki and Vergina in Imathia.[13]
As mentioned before, the cultural environment in Central Macedonia is particularly rich covering all phases of the Hellenic history.

The region’s archaeological, Byzantine and Ottoman monumental heritage can easily be pointed out by the creation of a network of archaeological sites. On the other hand, the newer built-up and monumental heritage can be shown through the reformation and upgrade of the historical places and the connection- totally or partially- of the traditional villages in wider geographic units, organized in tourism and recreation networks.

The creation of touristic, recreational and cultural networks is fundamental for the traditional villages found in mountainous or isolated regions and either shrink demographically or have been already abandoned, provided that these networks offer employment in their wider region. In Central Macedonia’s Region, such traditional settlements are found in the Prefectures of Thessaloniki (province of Lagkada), Chalkidiki (province of Arnaia-Chalkidiki), Kilkis (Paiko and Kroysia), Serres (Pangee and Mpeles), Pieria (Olympus and Pieria), Imathia (Vermio) and Pella (Kaimaktsalan, Aridaia area). Larger villages which have an important historical core (Galatista - Arnaia, Ano Nikiti, old Polygyros in Chalkidiki, old Lagkadas in Thessaloniki, Goymenissa in Kilkis, Kolindros - Litochoro in Pieria, First, Rodolivos in Serres etc.) can be included in such networks.
Certain natural and cultural areas (region Olympus - Pieria in the prefecture of Pieria, the prefecture of Arnaia in Chalkidiki and the basin of lakes Koronia - Volvi in the prefecture of Thessaloniki) are close to coastal areas with intense tourism. Therefore, their special protection is crucial.

As far as the protection and the promotion of the built-up environment, it is concluded that certain isolated efforts towards the maintenance and the reformation of some buildings or whole villages are not sufficient and that a complete land and development frame is necessary. According to the regional frame of land-planning and sustainable growth, the objectives are the following:

- **Thessaloniki: Balkan Centre of Culture and Sciences**
  **OBJECTIVES:**
  A) Consummation of modern cultural structures
  B) Stabilization and reinforcement of cultural institutions
  C) Reinforcement of international collaborations and contacts with emigrant Hellenism

- **Protection and promotion of the archaeological, Byzantine and Ottoman monumental heritage**
  **OBJECTIVES:**
  A) Completion of the excavations and promotion of the archaeological sites with national importance (Vergina, Pella, Dion, Olynths etc.)
  B) Promotion and re-establishment of the network of Byzantine and Ottoman Monuments
  C) Completion of the recording of the network of archaeological and monumental sites
  D) Growth and modernization of the museums

- **Promotion of the newer interest for the built-up and monumental heritage**
  **OBJECTIVES:**
  A) Specialization of the role of networks referring to the traditional villages
  B) Reformation and upgrade of historical sites
  C) Appointment of traditional villages’ networks
  D) Interventions in industrial or other special monuments
  E) Interventions in certain buildings or monuments with regional importance

- **Creation and reinforcement of the modern cultural structures**
  **OBJECTIVES:**
  A) Determination of the cultural policy and the network of structures in regional scale
  B) Specialization of the role of villages
  C) Reinforcement and promotion of local institutions and traditions
  D) Decentralization of cultural - educational and inquiring operations

- **Combination of the activities towards the promotion of tourism, culture and the protection of the environment**
  **OBJECTIVES:**
  A) Territorial methodologies of planning
  B) Sectional actions and enterprising plans
  C) Combination of territorial and sectional actions

After studying all national frames of land-planning and sustainable growth, it becomes clear that the application of a regulating land uses policy connected to the development process is fundamental. Initially, the organization of costal areas’ development is crucial as their saturation has exceeded the levels of the ecosystems’ ability for reestablishment. The interventions in the natural, cultural and traditional environment must follow high qualitative standards. The areas near coastal zones must be protected and must function as important natural resources, as the region of Olympus- Pieria in the prefecture of Pieria, Arnaia in Chalkidiki and the basin of lakes Koroneia- Volvi in the prefecture of Thessaloniki.
In the Prefecture of Pieria, the protection and exploitation of Olympus area can be more effective with the connection of traditional villages, the appointment of archaeological sites, the extension and exploitation of the national forest area, the reformation of Litochoro and Kolindros and the creation of a cultural park in Dion.

In the Prefecture of Imathia, the cultural axis between Vergina - Varvara - Veria – Naoussa combined with the exploitation of the Vermio mountain must be completed, creating the most complete and effective combination between culture-tourism-recreation and protection of the environment.

In the Prefecture of Pella, the exploitation of Kaimaktsalan should be connected with the surrounding natural environment (L. Agra - Baths etc.), as well as with the important urban and cultural history of Edessa.

In the Prefecture of Kilkis, unfortunately, the mountain Paiko with its traditional villages, Goumenissa (old traditional centre of wine industry) and Doirani remain without protection and promotion.

In the Prefecture of Serres, various geographic units (Kerkini, Mpelles, Pangeo, Strimonas) include interesting sites, while the city of Serres constitutes a cultural centre with its own tradition.

In the Prefecture of Thessaloniki, the expansion of activities and the collision between land uses shrink the natural and cultural environment, making it urgent to undertake certain measures for Thermaikos coastal area and the province of Lagkadas.

In the Prefecture of Chalkidiki, the central and northern part has been efficiently protected from the intense tourism in the coastal regions and, therefore, can develop cultural and tourist activities compatible with its environment. [14]

CONCLUSION

The need for protection and appointment of the cultural heritage of a country, has been officially recognized since 1969, when the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage was formed (London, 06/05/69). Three years later, this need was recognized worldwide at the International Convention on the Protection of the Universal Cultural and Natural Heritage (Paris, 16/11/72), which enforces all states which participated in this Convention to determine and present the elements which are under protection according to the Convention.

Both Conventions include protection measures and proposed actions for the protection and appointment of the cultural heritage of each Nation. The determination, protection, maintenance and exploitation of already existing and recognized cultural places, as well as non revealed in places where archeological sites already exist or ancient elements were found is included in the texts of both conventions. These texts also include the protection of material and intangible cultural elements (e.g. traditions) of cultural interest. Generally, after studying the provisions of these two conventions, we conclude that they include the majority of cultural elements which need protection and multiple ways and proposed measures to protect them.
Additionally, in the Greek law, twenty one years later, a new law, 3028/02 “For the protection of the antiquities and generally the cultural heritage” was introduced so that the provisions of elder laws are put into practice. This law, in combination with the proposed actions of the International Cultural Tourism Charter, constitutes the base on which the actions of the Regional frame of land-planning and sustainable growth were founded two years later in 2004.

According to the 3028/02 and the International Cultural Tourism Charter, and also the help of multiple planning tools (e.g. Eco-development areas, 1650/86 “For the protection of the environment”), the Regional frame of land-planning and sustainable growth is considered to incorporate all requirements and their objectives. The acceptance of the need for methodological and organized protection of the cultural heritage, such as the network organization of the cultural sites in proximity, is particularly positive. The variety of the protection measures which include individual actions, as well as actions in a wider territorial and sectional part, is very important. Actions for the maintenance of traditional villages and intangible cultural heritage are also included in it. Basically, this Frame is a good way of achieving the provisions and the guidelines that are included in the existing, until now, related texts (Greek Right and International and European Conventions).

The most important problem is the application of the measures which are included in the Regional frame of land-planning and sustainable growth. Its actions were expected to be applied via the Long-term Action plan of Land-planning of the Region (2001-2015), which would be supported, in the initial planning period, by the Regional Operational Program (Greek Community Support Framework III 2000-2006). However not only in the sector of Culture, but also in other important sectors, numerous measures included in the Regional Operational Program have not been finished and some of them have not even started yet.

Another Operational Frame for the region named Regional Operational Program of Macedonia and Thrace (Greek Community Support Framework IV 2007-2013 or National Strategic Reference Framework) was formed. The Regional Operational Program of Macedonia and Thrace for Central Macedonia’s Region is continuing the work of the previous Operational Period at least in the sector of the culture. It also includes actions and measures which were not completed in the past, as well as some additional actions. It is a fact, though, that even this program does not include any measure referring to the culture, except from three open invitations, while, surprisingly, we are in the middle of the Operational Period.

In conclusion, even though the Region of Central Macedonia allocates an enormous Cultural heritage, the recognition of its value is in a very precocious stage, resulting to its insufficient protection. It is clear that the efforts made are isolated and maybe insufficient without the expected results (e.g. Appointment and Reformation of the Aiges Palace). The only thing that can be concluded for sure is that there is still a huge need for forming suitable regulating plans, where land uses will be determined, so that the problem of the protection and exploitation of cultural heritage, is solved. Another factor that needs particular attention is the legislative protection through institutional laws of the natural and cultural heritage. Unfortunately, in this sector, very few things have been undertaken until today. This is the main reason for which the organization of land uses is crucial for the protection and promotion of the cultural heritage and the completion of the characterization and establishment of special terms for building in the traditional villages and the historical centers (traffic problems, land uses issues, terms of building etc).
REFERENCES


