The role of the integrated conservation of cultural heritage for a creative, resilient and sustainable city

Rehabilitation of historical cities and preservation of their cultural heritage.

Searching for a creative approach and innovative ways of management through the concept of the creative and sustainable city.

ELENI MAISTROU  NAPOLI- SEPTEMBER 2012

The concept of the creative and sustainable city can generate innovative ideas that could make historical cities a better place to live, work and enjoy and introduce innovative ways for their integrated conservation and rehabilitation.
THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABLE CITY

The idea of “sustainable city” and the idea of “integrated conservation” have many common goals.

Integrated conservation should act as a core component of urban sustainable development, because their parameters, goals and policies coincide to a large extent.

THE CONCEPT OF CREATIVE CITY

The “Creative City” is a place that always has more creative potential. It posits that conditions need to be created for people to think, plan and act with imagination in harnessing opportunities or addressing seemingly intractable urban problems.
For a creative city, infrastructure includes a highly skilled and flexible labor force; dynamic thinkers, creators and implementers.

Creativity is not only about having ideas, but also about the capacity to implement them.

Core concepts of the creative city are cultural planning and cultural resources.

Cultural resources are not only buildings, but also symbols, activities and local products in crafts, manufacturing and services.

Urban cultural resources include the historical, industrial and artistic heritage including architecture, urban landscapes or landmarks, local and indigenous traditions of public life, resources like language, food and cooking, leisure activities, intellectual traditions e.t.c
The creative city brings together high quality of built and natural places;

talented and diverse people who bring ideas, inspiration and passion to a place

and new investments ranging from the physical environment to the social networks, cultural organizations and knowledge institutions that together drive innovation

The creative city implies a holistic, creative thinking process that can be applied to a range of social, economic and environmental problems

The educational system is seen as an untapped resource in developing creative cities

Municipal policy has a significant role in city land use and development, in order to preserve the rich or mixed use nature of creative neighborhoods
Many of the features ascribed to the creative city constitute main features of the historical city.

but also

The concept of the “creative city”, can fuel a creative approach and innovative ways for the integrated conservation and rehabilitation of the historical cities.

THE CASE OF
THE HISTORICAL TOWN OF NAFPLIO
The historic center of Nafplion combines the image of a medieval town, characterized by the quaintness of the landscape, the free arrangement of roads, the free placing of monuments within the urban web and the unplanned open spaces, with the image of the cities of 19th and 20th century, which reintroduce the classic model of rectangular forms in the urban tissue.

The density of structures, the relation between built and open areas, as well as the important buildings – landmarks, the morphological variety of the facades, the quality, the workmanship and texture of the surfaces, the construction materials and the colours used, attribute the unique identity to the old city.
Some important buildings dating back to the Ottoman or Venetian period of the city, as well as neoclassic buildings dating after the deliberation of the city in 1828, constitute basic elements of the cultural historic context. Few modern buildings, built by famous Greek architects, contribute to the architectural heritage of the city.

High quality in the old town environment
Cultural tradition
Contemporary cultural activity
Traditional activities
Big number of public and private museums
Galleries
Theatre Studies
Annex of the University of Harvard,
Local press,
History & Culture gazettes,
Cultural clubs,
Libraries,
Art galleries

Hotels of high aesthetics,
Small-scale recreational and tourism units,
Taverns serving Greek delicacies,
Uniquely decorated bars,
Gift and fashion shops, etc.

STUDIES and URBAN REGULATIONS

Research included a general diagnosis of the city’s and broader area’s physiognomy and problems, from the point of view of urban organization, socioeconomic structure, architectural character, technical infrastructure and natural environment;

The research concluded in a series of regulations concerning land use, building outlines, zones of development, financial and statutory incentives, urban mechanisms, the protection of the natural and built environment, the improvement of the technical, cultural and social infrastructure and the quality of life, etc.
**Special decrees for the old town:**

(a) Preservation of the traditional urban web
(b) Classification of the historical buildings and elements of the old town
(c) Pedestrianization of numerous streets,
(d) Determination of permissible land use,
(e) Specification of a building regulations.
(f) Terms and limitations governing the placement of signs and the private expansions into public space
Need to upgrade the public space

It was also suggested to complete the necessary cultural and social infrastructure. Upgrade of the form and function of the free public areas, control of circulation and parking of cars, reinforcement of pedestrian zones, enhancement of the infrastructure networks, paving and urban equipment, rehabilitation of the facades of historic buildings.

These interventions aimed at the city’s sustainable development, the improvement of the quality of life, as well as the highlighting of all the elements composing its character, its value and the quality of the historic ensemble.
Documentation of a historic building, from the Venetian period

Innovative actions 1990 -2000

(a) participial procedures and scientific and informative conferences addressed to the residents of the town,
(b) contest among the owners of classified buildings, for the best rehabilitation of the facades of their buildings.
(c) educative seminar to the town's engineers on ‘Techniques for the Conservation and Rehabilitation’.
(d) students of Architecture created an educational game for the school goers, in order for them to become better acquainted with their town and its history.
(e) informative conference for teachers.
Nafplio can be considered creative

But “the municipal policy has a significant role in city land use and development, in order to preserve the rich or mixed use nature of neighborhoods”

Innovative ideas and actions 2000 -2010

Creation of a Museum of the City; a dynamic cultural pole utilizing the new technologies.

Highlighting of cultural poles and recreational areas outside the old town and promotion of all cultural features and natural beauty of the surrounding area.
Restoration of the town’s relationship with the waterfront.

Poles of historic interest will constitute a strong cultural network through their connection to the waterfront.

Creation of a walking and public recreational area including a waterfront walk, routes inside the historic center, buildings with cultural use throughout the city and the fortifications.

Highlighting of the seafront zone offering a considerable view towards the old town and its fortified hills.
Creation of a **database** to document the cultural heritage of the historical city. It will serve as an important tool to plan the **preservation and development** of the historical city, to **increase awareness** among the general public, to **evaluate** the quantitative and qualitative changes in the city and create **management tools**.

**The new generation contributes its innovative ideas**

Upgrading the waterfront and creation of a linear park, running parallel to the coast.

*Yiannis Baltagiannis, University of Sheffield, Dpt. of Landscape, May 2005*
The new generation contributes its innovative ideas

Creation of a Park for Environmental Information and Protection of the Local Ecosystem, on the town's waterfront.

The new generation contributes its innovative ideas

Rehabilitation and reuse of an old Ottoman religious school (medresses) to house a library connected online with historic libraries in Athens, and with the French army and Venice archives.
The new generation contributes its innovative ideas

Creation of a generic platform of multilayer information for the historical town: history, culture, products and landscape. The platform is realized with units having flexible scale able to interact with a variety of users, located in open spaces of the city.

Dimitris PSYCHOGIOS,
school of Architecture NTUA
Site analysis - Urban analysis
1. **ANALYSE URBAINÉE**

*Chemin* d'accessibilité

**ÉCHAPPEZ NOUVELLES** vers le diagnostic

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**PROJET URBAIN:** REUNIFIER LES OUVBRAGES DU TEMPS

**OBJECTIFS:**
- Améliorer l'entrée de ville du centre ancien
- Mettre en valeur les vestiges des remparts
- Rénover une façade maritime congruente
- Mettre en valeur les abords et les accès à l'aqueduc
The Future of Xenia Hotel
The historical city can attract fuel and promote the creative art of architectural and urban design, forming the heritage of the future.

At the same time, the historical city should benefit from a creative public policy that should be applied to a range of social, economic and environmental problems and the art of winning community support in order to obtain a sustainable development.

“To meet the demands of living well together in the future, we recommend that the art of city – embracing ecological growth as social, environmental, cultural and economic diversity; and governance as transparent forms of genuine, effective participation, dialogue and mutual learning, and

We call for inter-sector transversal and sensitive approaches to urban development. Such approaches should allow indeterminate common spaces for shared use in our cities.

We recommend governments to integrate the significant contributions of artwork and art-creating processes in urban development.”

Recommendations presented during the workshop “Sustainable Creative Cities: the role of the arts in globalised urban contexts” (the workshop was co-organized by the Asia – Europe Foundation and its partners)