

Proceedings

of the

International Conference on

Changing Cities II

Spatial, Design, Landscape & Socio-economic Dimensions

Under the aegis of

The Department of Planning and Regional Development, University of Thessaly

The Greek Ministry of Environment, Energy & Climate Change

The Greek Ministry of Tourism

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Porto Heli, Peloponnese, Greece, June 22-26, 2015

TITLE **Proceedings of the International Conference on Changing Cities II:
Spatial, Design, Landscape & Socio-economic dimensions**

ISBN **978-960-6865-88-6**

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Grafima Publ.

Str. Eksadaktylou 5

54635 Thessaloniki, Greece

Tel/Fax: 2310-248272

www.grafima.com.gr,

E-mail: grafima@grafima.com.gr

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FORWARD

The 1st international conference on ‘*Changing Cities*’, which was hosted on Skiathos island, 18-22 June 2013, had started as an idea three years ago. The initial concept was to organise an academic event creative, inspiring, stimulating, and above all, *international*. There had been a belief that such an academic event may contribute in revitalizing academia and promoting tourism in Greece - hit by the economic crisis of public debt in the Eurozone. Given that during the last years, both societies and cities in Greece have been dramatically changing, shrinking in economic, spatial and demographic terms, we have chosen *Changing Cities* as the main theme of this series of conferences. Our aspiration is to provide an international forum for transaction of ideas on cities and bring together architects, urban designers, landscape designers, urban planners, urban geographers, urban economists, urban sociologists and demographers, to investigate new challenges. This goal became a reality. The 1st Changing Cities conference had gained strong interest of academics and researchers from many countries and regions around the world; Greece and the Balkans, south Europe and Mediterranean countries, northwest Europe, Middle East and Asia, Far East, North America, Latin America and Africa. A total of about 460 abstracts and 320 papers had been submitted in the conference – most of them, about 60% from abroad.

The 2nd Changing Cities conference has also attracted the attention of scholars, not only from Greece, the Balkans and Europe, but also from far-away countries like USA and Canada, Brazil, Chile, Colombia in Latin America, and China, Japan and Australia in the far-east. We have received 510 abstracts and more than 350 papers. Among the scholars participating, there are about 192 Greek academics and researchers. This indicates that despite shortage of research funds, salary cuts, and broken morale, university teachers and researchers in Greek state universities try hard to keep a high-level academic status. Besides, the number of contributions by scholars from abroad (64%) shows the international character of the conference.

The strong interest for this conference allows us to have thoughts about organising the 3rd Changing Cities conference in one or two years’ time, spatially hosted in a different Greek resort area.

I would like first to thank the Organising Committee, the keynote speakers, and the members of the international scientific board who supported enthusiastically the academic organization of this conference. I would especially like to thank those colleagues who have also pre-organized special sessions in this conference.

Finally, I would like to thank all the academic, political and scientific organisations which supported this conference: University of Thessaly; the Greek Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change; the Greek Ministry of Tourism; The Regional Authority of Peloponnese; The Technical Chamber of Greece – Branch of Peloponnese; the Association of the Greek Landscape Architects; KTIRIO - Technical Publications; the Association of Greek Urban Planners and Regional Development Engineers; the Association of Greek Urban Planners; the Association of Greek Architects.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS



Organizing Committee	iii
Scientific Board	iv
Forward	vii
Table of Contents	viii

KEYNOTE SPEECHES

- **Prof. Achille Ippolito**, the Sapienza University of Rome, President of the Associazione culturale architetto Simonetta Bastelli
'Landscape and sustainable design in urban open spaces' 2
- **Prof. Kostas Moraitis**, National Technical University of Athens
'Multicultural city and region identity: Cross-border connectivity and multicultural cooperation-effort or political conflict?' 12
- **Prof. Spyros Vougiaris**, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Deputy-minister in Transportation and Communications twice (2001-2002 and 2010-2011), and deputy-minister in Public Order and Citizens Protection (2009-2010)
'Alternative pedestrianization options for Nikis coastal avenue in Thessaloniki, Greece' 19

PRE-ORGANIZED SPECIAL SESSIONS

Self-organization in urban change: concepts, instruments and practical implications
organized by Willem Salet and Federico Savini, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

- **Changing spatialities of Istanbul: From a bottom-up informal development towards a state-led flexible urban transformation**
Z. Enlil, İ. Dinçer, C. Akyos, B. Can Çetin..... 30

Multicultural region and city physiognomy: Cross-border collaboration and contested identity

organized by Kostas Moraitis and Elena Konstantinidou, National Technical University of Athens, Greece

- **Urban identity through the attributes of the urban body network configuration**
E. Androutsopoulou 41
- **Immaterial matters in changing, resilient cities**
Y. Hadjichristou and M. Hadjisoteriou..... 49
- **A Greek pre-industrial heritage monument as Western cultural heritage**
I. Kourouni..... 58

- **Monuments of different eras in the city of Aigio. Their contribution to the development of the city**
R. Mitoula, G. Malindretos and E. Markopoulou..... 66
- **Trans-national cultural landscape branding in relation to multicultural space identity**
K. Moraitis 76
- **Multicultural References and ‘colonizing’ architecture: Investigating “Political Branding”**
K. Moraitis, M. Sioulas 85
- **“Ecosophic gamification”: the city as a “rhizomatic eco-playscape”**
S. Mouzakitis 94
- **Contested spaces**
S.Th. Rassia..... 106
- **Multicultural Nicosia: Searching for a common cultural Identity in East Mediterranean Basin**
M. Sioulas..... 114
- **The multicultural identity of the places of Ano Syros and Hermoupolis**
A. Vasilara, J. Stefanou..... 123
- **Landscape as Cross - Border Infrastructure. Mediterranean Ports as Inter - National possibilities**
A. Zomas, M. Papavasileiou..... 131

Urban open spaces. Strategies for sustainable design
organized by Achille Ippolito, Sapienza University, Italy

- **Sustainable public spaces in the contemporary urban landscape**
L. Alessi..... 137
- **For the sustainable requalification of the urban open spaces**
F. Antonucci 144
- **Sustainable Renovation of historical urban settlements outdoor spaces**
R. Belibani , A. Capanna, P. Gregory..... 151
- **Life styles and city of the future. The shaping of public space in Rome**
A. Capuano..... 161
- **The Landscape Features in the Urban Context. Sustainable Strategies for the small town in the South of Italy**
D. Cialdea 169
- **Liveliness and livability of urban space. Perception of well-being and public space design**
M. Clemente..... 180
- **The hybrid network of public open spaces**
A. Pea..... 188
- **Variations in land-use/land-cover changes (LULCCs) in a peri-urban Mediterranean nature reserve: the estate of Castelporziano (Central Italy)**
F. Recanatesi, M. Tolli, M.N. Ripa, A. Leone..... 196
- **New Public solar spaces. The role of the urban spaces ad a model for a different and real sustainability**
D. Scatena 205
- **The public space for the present city**
F. Toppetti..... 212

Creative and Smart Cities

organized by S. Avgerinou-Kolonia, National Technical University of Athens, Greece

- **Creative industries in the Historical Center of Athens: A strategy for urban revitalisation**
S. Avgerinou-Kolonias, A. Toufengopoulou and I. Spyropoulos 222

- **Creative Cities between theory and practice: The role of planning and some thoughts on Greek cities**
D. Foutakis, E. Thoidou 231
- **Different types of creativity in Greece: the case study of Exarchia**
E. Louka, P.M. Delladetsimas 241
- **Creativity and historical cities in the Mediterranean Sea Basin: Developmental dimensions and perspectives through collaboration and networking**
Y. Theodora, S. Avgerinou - Kolonias 254
- **Innovative mechanisms for the timeless redefinition of development policy and urban planning**
K. Valerianou 262

Heritage and planning in a time of economical crisis

organized by Anna Geppert, Universite Paris Sorbonne, France

- **Historic city heritage management with digitization and open data**
P. Chatzigrigoriou 270
- **Decree claims, civil engagement and historic urban landscape management – the case of Warsaw**
A. Kupidura 278
- **The power of fiction in times of crisis: movie-tourism and heritage planning in “Montalbano’s places”**
F. Lo Piccolo, A. Giampino, V. Todaro 283
- **Historical centers & built heritage management. An educational approach and some relevant considerations**
E. Maistrou 293

Heritage and changing cities

organized by John Pendlebury and Tim Townsend, Newcastle University, UK

- **The concept of heritage and its possible operational nature Notes on the Italian case**
F. Acuto, F. Bonfante 301
- **Why reconfiguring identity of historic public spaces...?**
M. Akkar Ercan 311
- **Rebuilding from the countryside. The Hakka settlement for the Green City of the future in Pearl River Delta**
M. Meriggi 322
- **Chinese treaty ports and the Bund: a case of global colonial heritage?**
C. Pallini, D. Bona 332
- **Improving the cultural experience of a place: an innovative approach**
M. Sepe 341
- **The Hakka architectural and landscape heritage in Pearl River Delta. Values and contradictions in the current planning practice**
T. Zhu, C. Zhen 351

In Quest of Sustainable Urban Mobility

organized by Apostolos Papagiannakis and Magda Pitsiava-Latinopoulou, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

- **How does socio-economic status affect mobility patterns of families with pre-school children?**
I. Armouti and C. Antoniou 362

- **Integration of a tramway alignment in the urban transport system towards sustainability**
M. Chatziparaskeva, C. Pyrgidis..... 370
- **Investigation of the barrier effect in the urban environment due to road axes passing through it: the case of Dispilio, Kastoria**
S. Emmanouilidis, S. Basbas and I. Politis..... 382
- **Strasbourg Eurométropole, a cross-border conurbation towards new sustainable mobility patterns**
C. Mazzoni, A. Grigorovschi..... 392
- **Intelligent Transport Systems deployment in Greece: assessment of costs and benefits**
E. Mitsakis, P. Iordanopoulos, E. Mintsis, S. Mamarikas..... 409
- **An urban strategy in time of crisis: Mobility management and low-cost public space design**
A. Papagiannakis, A. Vitopoulou..... 419
- **Main attributes of road transport external cost before and after the emergence of the economic crisis. Pilot study in Thessaloniki, Greece**
M. Sotiriou, N. Gavanas, M. Pitsiava-Latinopoulou..... 430
- **The impacts of illegal parking on the urban areas' traffic and environmental conditions: the case of the city of Thessaloniki**
A. Tsakalidis, P. Tsoleridis and M. Pitsiava-Latinopoulou..... 442
- **Level and quality of public transport service in relation to various urban characteristics: the case of Thessaloniki, Greece**
D. Tsamtzi, A. Sdoukopoulos and M. Pitsiava-Latinopoulou..... 449
- **Urban Patterns, mobility and environmental quality: An empirical study for the city of Thessaloniki**
E. Verani, G. Pozoukidou, A. Sdoukopoulos..... 460

Exploring the 'fringscape': socioeconomic and territorial drivers of change
organized by Luca Salvati, Third University of Rome, Italy

- **So Close yet so Far: Urban Growth, Socioeconomic Structure and the Spatial Pattern of Crime in a Southern European City**
R. Di Bartolomei, K. Rontos, L. Salvati..... 478
- **The effects of infrastructure in real estate: Some Greek suburban area evidence**
A. Kiakou..... 488
- **Towards spatial and urban planning for sustainable territorial development of urban peripheral zones**
M. Maksin, M. Nenkovic-Riznic, V. Ristic..... 498
- **Mediterranean horizon: desertification, local disparities and new territorial scenario**
L. Salvati, S. Messina, R. Di Bartolomei..... 507
- **Urban sprawl and interstitial spaces: a conceptual definition for undeveloped areas and their morphological implications in planning**
C. Silva Lovera..... 517
- **In-between urban competitiveness and economic informality. Rise and decline of the 'Mediterranean city' concept**
L. Sini, L. Salvati..... 528

Implication of peri-urban agriculture in urban growth and regional development
organized by Luca Salvati, Third University of Rome, Italy and Pere Serra, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain

- **Understanding changes in urban and agricultural systems: an exploratory analysis**
A. Cavallo, B. Di Donato and D. Marino..... 538

- **Thrasio Plain – Greece: multiple urban–environmental issues and proposals for a possible recovery of the area**
A. Mavrakis, L. Salvati..... 543
- **Densifying Athens, Decompacting Barcelona, Rethinking Rome: a Brief Reflection Beyond Sprawl**
L. Salvati and I. Zambon..... 559
- **Land quality, economic growth and convergence in territorial dynamics: A brief commentary**
A. Sateriano, L. Salvati 569

Landscape: a green infrastructure approach

organized by Yannis Tsalikidis, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece

-
- **Water management theories and practices in the planning and design of cities and towns**
E.A. Athanasiadou and S. Sposito..... 580
 - **A parametric landscape design approach for urban green infrastructure development**
E. Charalampidis, I. Tsalikidis..... 591
 - **Destruction of a relict landscape for a new community: The case of Yedikule Urban Gardens, Istanbul**
E. Durusoy, D. Cihanger..... 601
 - **Applying Ecological Landscape Concepts and Metrics in Urban Landscape Management**
B.M. Fonseca, R.P. Ribas, A.C.M. Moura 611
 - **Free spaces – Urban and suburban green in a city of intermediate size**
K. Lantitsou..... 621
 - **Agricultural role in environmental technical network: urban agriculture in the city's relationship with food**
N.S. Lemos and E.W. Rutkowski..... 631
 - **Aspects of familiarization in open green spaces in Athens**
D. Liameti, E. Ntafa, E. Spanogianni, G. Chalaris, and S. Chaldezou..... 637
 - **Road safety, human factor and landscape architecture, are they related?**
E. Marinou, F. Kehagia 647
 - **Design strategy for the development and revitalization of public space in the city of Rethymno**
C. Mavrou, A. Michantas, Z. Ouranos, G. Patsoumas..... 656
 - **City-Nature. Conspicuous places in the Mediterranean landscape**
M. Montemurro..... 665
 - **Geotechnologies in management of conflicts of interests in urban areas in remarkable landscape of Quadrilátero Ferrífero, Minas Gerais, Brazil**
A.C.M. Moura, F. Carsalade, A.C.S. Noronha, S. Accioly 673
 - **Establishing wildflower meadows as groundcover for use in archaeological sites**
M. Papafotiou, E. Kanellou, F. Economou, A. Paraskevopoulou and E. Kartsonas..... 683
 - **Effect of substrate type and irrigation frequency on performance of native xerophytes at extensive green roofs of Eastern Mediterranean**
M. Papafotiou, L. Tassoula, N. Pergialioti, E. Papanastasatos, M. Fouskaki, D. Galanis, R. Kefalopoulou and G. Liakopoulos 691
 - **Investigating visitor perceptions at Alsos Veikou urban park**
A.T. Paraskevopoulou, I. Dasenaki 699
 - **Landscape design for vulnerable social groups**
S.A. Piperidou, E.A. Athanasiadou, M. Tratsela 706

- **Discovering public space during economic crisis: urban courtyard regeneration, pocket park and parklet creation**
M. Sinou, R. Perakaki 715
- **Thinking about urban agriculture in the aspect of the utilization of city space**
W. Xiao-jing, Z. Yu-kun..... 725

Urban habitat regeneration: Challenges

organized by Tatjana Mrđenović, University of Beograd, Serbia

- **Gentrification. Case study : Metaxourghio of Athens**
D. Chondrogianni..... 733
- **City on the Rise: Mega Projects vs. Public Resistance**
E. Dogan 743
- **How can the success of urban regeneration be evaluated? Analysis of two criteria: gentrification and sustainability for Çukurambar and Kızılırmak Neighborhoods cases from Ankara-Turkey**
B. Durmaz 751
- **Urban design and identity: re-creating waterfront brownfield *Savamala* case**
T. Mrđenović, A. Đukić, A. Stupar..... 759
- **IPI methodology for designing resilience habitat regeneration strategies using OIKONET platform**
T. Mrdjenovic, M. Devetaković, V. Joklova, E. Krasilnikova..... 770
- **Traffic planning in Belgrade in times of economic uncertainty**
S. Tanasković..... 783

Adjusting Cities

organized by Heleni Haniotou, National Technical University of Athens, Greece

- **Planning for urban adaptation Insights from complexity sciences**
H. Haniotou, E. Skrimizea..... 792
- **Experiencing alter architectures**
B. Morovich, V. Ziegler..... 802
- **Developing green space strategies to face climate change in cities: Vegetation as critical success factor**
M. Papaioannou 810

Urban Design as a Creative Planning Tool

organized by Athanasios Pagonis, National Technical University of Athens, Greece

- **Landscape Infrastructure as a mediating tool for Planning. The case of *Elaionas*: From dump site to urban bio-periphery**
I. Carydi 816
- ***What the generic is not*: Athens as a case against the informal**
P. Issaias 826
- **Design as a tool to manifest the social dimension of architecture**
M. Kaltsa..... 836
- **Methodological tools for reading and designing the urban landscape**
M. Marlanti 847
- **Synergies between urban design and planning: In search of a new planning model for the Athenian metropolis**
A. Pagonis 851

- **The architecture of the city: From objects to relationships Strategies and design tools for the 21st century metropolis**
A. Vozani 857

Coastal Cities: public space, commons and environment. Sharing narratives, ideas and practices

*organized by Christy Petropoulou, Despina Katapodi and Georgios Tsilimigas
Aegean University, Greece*

-
- **Urban eco-landscape and urban sprawl. Mytilene and Ayvalik, a comparative approach**
E. Artemi, C. Petropoulou 862
 - **Cultural representations and public spaces in an Aegean island port town, 1920 – 1940**
C. Bakalis 874
 - **Mapping population distribution in coastal zones using soil sealing datasets: Evidence from North and South Aegean islands**
M. Deligianni, G. Tsilimigkas, G. Pavlogeorgatos 883
 - **Programmable ecosystems: creating an architectural design tool through urban environmental analysis**
A. Karagianni, P. Parthenios, S. Yiannoudes 890
 - **The contested common space in Athens, Istanbul, Thessaloniki and Izmir: from the neoliberal creative city to the rebel city and vice versa**
Ch. Tsavdaroglou 896
 - **Coastal zones definition: Evidence from North and South Aegean islands**
A. Zerbopoulos, G. Tsilimigkas, G. Pavlogeorgatos 906

Happy city and urban design

organized by Marichela Sepe, Universita degli Studi Federico II Napoli, Italy

-
- **Being happy outside the traffic jams: Moral climate and its impact on transport network modeling within the cities after state socialism**
M. Kleyman 914
 - **Achieving urban happiness: factors and principles**
M. Sepe 921

Bricolage Urbanism: How Small Interventions Can Make Big Change

organized by Alkistis Rodi, University of Patras, Greece

-
- **Urban eco-acupuncture methods : case study in the city of Athens**
M. Apostolou 932

SenseScapes: Sound+Smell+Light Scape in the Urban Context

*organized by Kalliopi Chourmouziadou and Konstantinos Sakadamis
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece*

-
- **A case study on the influence of landscape design on soundscape characteristics of urban parks**
I. Kaymaz, N. Belkayalı, N. Akpınar 942
 - **Evaluating urban morphology & traffic interventions impact at the environmental acoustic landscape, within the rehabilitation project of Panepistimiou Street**
K. Vogiatzis, C. Antoniadis 952
 - **Perceptions of smellscape in urban intermodal transit spaces: understanding “pleasantness” as a concept for design in an English context**
J. Xiao, J. Kang, M. Tait, V. Henshaw 961

Planning new cities

organized by Despoina Dimelli, Technical University of Crete, Greece

- **Karachi, Pakistan_A postwar study of Ioannis Despotopoulos for a federative urban organism**
T. Andrianopoulos 972
- **The Construction of Meaning: investigating the New Urban Developments in Ramallah**
S.Q. Awad..... 982
- **Urban regeneration in Chinese post-industrial cities. Three examples**
C. Kypritzis..... 992
- **The buildings as a factor in the formation of the environmental conditions in Greek cities**
N. Papamanolis, M. Davaki, D. Dimelli 1001
- **Aspra Spitia 2015: intentions and transformations Constantinos A. Doxiadis' industrial settlement and its development**
S. Yiannoudes, N. Patsavos, V. Tsesmetzis..... 1007

The Urban Block contributing to smart city

organized by Iordanis Styliadis, University of Thessaly, Greece

- **Urban regeneration + Social integration. Rome as a case study**
M. Argenti, M. Percoco..... 1020
- **Continuity and change in the old urban grid layouts: A case of Istanbul's historical peninsula**
S. Saylan, T.K. Güner..... 1031

Climate sensitive urban design for active life

organized by Kristina Nilsson, Lulea Technical University, Sweden

- **The Impacts of the climate change in the coastal areas. The case study of South Pieria**
E. Baltas, M. Nikou, V. Kotsios 1042
- **Planning the resilient cities under climatic changes**
H. Baral..... 1050
- **Land Cover projection based on Chain Markov and Cellular Automata: Case study of Pampulha - Brazil**
G.A. Carvalho, A.C.M. Moura 1058
- **From snowfall to meltwater. Re-considering the winter city**
S. Ramos..... 1069

MAIN THEME OF THE CONFERENCE

Resilient cities: “Planning and Designing resilient cities under economic and environmental uncertainty”

- **“Green” and resilient: shaping a new identity for Thessaloniki**
E. Athanassiou, M. Kapsali, M. Karagianni 1080
- **Seeking for a method to determine vulnerability of cities to climate change**
P. Çobanyılmaz, Ü. Duman Yüksel..... 1089
- **Landscape for Change: Insights on the contribution of Landscape Architecture in designating resilient cities**
E. Gavriilidou..... 1098
- **Urban territories as energy thresholds of human perception: *Introducing ecology to aesthetics***
A. Kitrinariis..... 1108

- **Quality of resilient cities, the issue of urban waste**
U. Koźmińska, A. Oniszk-Popławska, E.D. Ryńska 1118
- **Assessing post fire flood risk potential in a typical Mediterranean Wildland-Urban Interface of Greece**
I. Mitsopoulos, G. Eftychidis, C. Papathanasiou, C. Makropoulos and M. Mimikou..... 1127
- **Resilience as an urban regeneration and management process: the case of the Eastern waterfront area of Lisbon**
A. Nevado 1136
- **Planning Smart and Resilient cities in the face of climate change for better framing mitigation and adaptation strategies**
R. Papa, A. Galderisi, M.C. Vigo Majello, E. Saretta 1146
- **Possible contributions of the idem and ipse identities to the learning process of the resilient city**
A.P.G.M. Pinto, M.L.P. Silva and V.F. Fraga..... 1157
- **Mitigating flooding in a typical urban area in North Western Attica in Greece**
D. Serbis, C. Papathanasiou and N. Mamassis 1164
- **In/Out of Crisis, emergent and adaptive cities**
A. Swiny, M. Georgiou and Y. Hadjichristou 1172
- **From one to all: A design method towards a flexible “polykatoikia”**
I. Tsoukalas, G. Vegliris..... 1181
- **Reducing seismic vulnerability of public spaces. Guidelines for building facades and non-structural elements in the Reconstruction Plan of Fossa**
M.R. Vitale, C. Serra..... 1191

THEMATIC SESSIONS

Urban Design in Planning

- **The Niemeyer Way in Niteroi, a challenge for redevelopment of the City Center**
M.N.S. Azevedo..... 1203
- **Olympic Rio de Janeiro and the urban impacts of the mega-event**
C. Duarte, P. Maya-Monteiro 1215
- **Analyzing urban growth patterns in Metropolitan Alexandria: The fractal geometry approach**
A.E. Hasan, I.Y. El-Bastawissi and H.M. Ayad 1223
- **Adaptable urbanism - reappropriation of the abandoned military camp “Tagari” in Florina, Greece**
A. Ioannou..... 1232
- **Open-ended design processes in urban design. The case study of European platform**
G. Kalnis 1239
- **An interpretation of the urban development of London based on Heraclitus**
M. Kostaropoulou..... 1249
- **Dramatic, organic and systematic change in urban development – insights from Berlin**
M. Louekari 1258
- **Participatory planning and design: proposals for abandoned areas of the urban fabric in Greece**
A. Ntrenogianni, P. Tzika- Kostopoulou, A. Tzifa, K. Liapi..... 1268
- **The boundary between the city and the sea, between culture and nature. The paradigm of the waterfront in the city of Chania**
A.V. Proimou..... 1279

Sustainable Urban Planning & Development

- **Hotel project viability and fear of terror attack in Abuja: Investors' rationality and the risk dilemma**
J. Babarinde 1287
- **Urban Planning and Sustainable Development**
K. Chalevas 1297
- **Distributed Generation based transformation of urban planning**
S. Chen, Y. Zhang, R. Zhang..... 1302
- **Miami Dade county – community urban center ordinance process**
M. Crowley..... 1311
- **A Study on the Urban Conservation in the Urban Extension Project in Paris -Idea of Architect Louis Bonnier and Contemporary Grand Paris Project-**
K. Eguchi, K. Kawano..... 1320
- **Smart city and Metropolitan area: the energy component in the case studies of Genoa and Naples**
C. Gargiulo, R. Battarra, C. Lombardi and M. Raimondo 1330
- **A proposal towards the formation of participation for urban transformation areas in developing & least developed countries**
A. Gün 1342
- **Neapolis – Case study in conservation of Mediterranean cultural heritage and environmental planning**
M. Margalith 1351
- **Urban and environmental planning- delivering planning solutions for a sustainable future**
P. Mihajlovic, L.M. Stosic 1360
- **Abandoned buildings. Re-use strategies and technical solutions for social housing**
M. Plastina..... 1367
- **Designing energy futures: a case study from The Gambia**
A. Schiffer..... 1377
- **DE/BaTE. Deconstructing/Building a Thinking Environment**
C. Siddi..... 1386
- **Relevant aspects for the healthy mobility: *Experiences of students and staff of Colleges Jaguariuna (FAJ) and Max Planck-Brazil***
A.M.G. Sperandio, T.C.R. Dutra, P. Pereira, A.M. Soriani, M.J.B. Moreira, M.A. Guerreiro and M.L. Bortoletto..... 1396
- **Transport Interchange Design: Analyzing the case of the New Railway Station of Thessaloniki**
M. Tsami, G. Adamos and E. Nathanail..... 1401

Urban Landscapes, Landscape Planning & Design

- **Urban volumetric capacity analysis in Brazil: a Pampulha case study**
J. Borges, A.C. Moura, G. Carvalho..... 1410
- **The quality of the urban landscape: how to measure it and how to identify the elements that devalue it**
A. Campos 1420
- **New cycles of life for quarry sites in Rome, Italy**
P. Guarini..... 1429
- **Accessibility, travel and access to services and facilities in *Hay Mohammadi*, a new urban development in Agadir, Morocco**
S. Malak Bennisser, A. Hnaka, N. Benaoda-Tlemçani and C. Harrouni 1437

- **Urban projects in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: changes in landscape and challenges for the future of the city**
D. Pinheiro-Machado, H. Barandier, R. Cavallazzi..... 1448
- **A city and a wind farm. Landscape perspective**
A. Sas-Bojarska 1460
- **The condition of urban landscape constant changing: the creative perspectives of its kinaesthetic reading**
A. Stamatopoulou..... 1470
- **How much can residential density tell us about the structure (morphology) of the urban landscape?**
R. Stiles, B. Gasienica-Wawrytko, W. Feilmayr 1480

Architectural & Urban Design: concepts, instruments and practical implications

- **Redesigning venues for cultural activities in urban space: from multi-purpose to specific purpose halls**
N. Barkas, E. Artemi 1491
- **Interior cities: learning from the medieval walled-city for a future Los Angeles urban typology**
B. Boberska and P. Culley..... 1501
- **Crowdsourced information from Tweets during the WorldCup in Brazil: A theme search**
J. Borges, P. Jankowski, C.A. Davis Junior 1511
- **“Compacting” the Sprawling City. Building Type and Idea of the “Fabric-Building”**
F. Defilippis..... 1520
- **The development of the tourist model in luxury hotels: the case of Amalia Hotels in Greece**
Z. Georgiadou, D. Frangou, P. Chatzopoulos 1531
- **Mapping as a tool for design in the studio teaching**
N. Marda 1543
- **Data-field architectures: from the representation of *Logos* and *Logios* to the pre-requisite of *Logging In/On***
A. Moras..... 1549
- **Looking blue may not mean being blue: on southern mass housing**
M. Pacheco..... 1559
- **Tlön: the city in a utopian civilisation of tolerance**
A. Romanos..... 1571
- **Changing cemeteries in changing cities**
D.D. Zavraka..... 1591

Urban Cultures & Public Open Spaces

- **Inflating the Public**
V. Antoniou, R. Carraz, Y. Hadjichristou..... 1597
- **Regaining public space· the case study of Hagia Sophia axis**
A. Bourlidou, I. Pavlidou, S. Lefaki..... 1607
- **Edges, exchanges and events; as strategic reinvigoration of city**
G. Brown 1617
- **The emergence of the “autobiographic economy:” autobiography as a collective pursuit in the urban realm**
A. Dimitrakopoulos..... 1628

- **Commerce at night: contemporary changes for intermediary cities**
C. Filho, F. Braida, F. Fonseca and C. Cardoso 1638
- **The tramway effect on city life : A lever for creating better quality public spaces**
S. Lavadinho, B. Lensele..... 1648
- **Gender space dynamics of urban outdoor public leisure spaces**
S. Mahimkar, V.A. Gokhale..... 1649
- **Diacosmos: Ornament as a medium to describe City Identity in Literature. The case of N. Kazantzakis ‘Travels’**
D. Mermigi, E. Tsakiri..... 1659
- **Countercultures, informal expressions and gentrification: the case of Skid Row and its relation to the changing downtown of Los Angeles, CA**
A. Moras, K. Dastiridou..... 1669
- **Changing Urban Mosques in a Multicultural City: The Meanings of the Mosque Open Spaces as Communal Spaces in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**
N.D. Nizarudin..... 1681

Historical Centers & Built Heritage Management

- **The Duality on Historical City Center and New City Center: Unidentity of a center in Case of Kayseri**
A.M. Ayten, Ç.Baydoğan, S.S.Ayten, S. Güner, A.Kılıç..... 1689
- **A sustainable future for historic buildings**
F. Calvanus, M. Noonan, K. Theologidou..... 1699
- **Reducing seismic vulnerability of public spaces. Guidelines for safe spaces in the Reconstruction Plan of Fossa**
C.F. Carocci, M. Giuffrè..... 1709
- **The development of trade spaces in Antioch**
E. Çekmecelioğlu, Y. Say Özer, and N.O. Özer..... 1719
- **Utopia Nostalgia and Reality. Making Historical Cities Livable - Jerusalem as case study**
D. Guggenheim..... 1727
- **Tourism development in the Greek traditional settlements of Santorini island and the cultural landscape preservation policy**
T. Ishimoto..... 1735
- **Restoration of the catholicon of Archangeliotissa holy church and modulation of the surrounding environment**
K. Lantitsou..... 1745
- **Basic directions for the preservation-restoration of Xanthi’s Old Town**
K. Lantitsou..... 1754
- **Learning from Tilanqiao, Shanghai’s former Jewish Ghetto - Conservation of cultural heritage as a stimulus for development in changing urban centers**
M. Margalith 1763
- **Spatial planning for the protection of monumental heritage in Greece: evaluating the case of the UNESCO sites**
M. Papageorgiou..... 1770
- **The preservation of the architectural heritage in Albania: the case study of the Dollma tekke (tomb) in Kruja**
F. Pashako, K. Kabashi, E. Ismailanji, B. Kasami..... 1781
- **Built Heritage Conservation as a Basic Component of the Bioclimatic Redevelopment of the Historical Center of Larissa**
N.C. Samaras..... 1797

- **Cagliari, historic heritage vs contemporary uses. Developing a toolkit...**
C. Siddi, G.B. Cocco and F. Sau..... 1807
- **The hidden myth of a forgotten kingdom: the potential of ancient Phthia as a cultural heritage centre**
V.D. Spanos..... 1817
- **Eighteen English Towns Revisited: a review of the impact of 30 years of development upon Alec Clifton-Taylor's series of English market towns**
D. Wilkinson..... 1825

Environmental Urban Planning & Design

- **Methods to mitigate the environmental impact of highways – the example of D-100 Highway in Anatolian İstanbul**
E.Ö. Aktuğlu Aktan, N.Ç. Erkan..... 1835
- **Transforming inactive infrastructures: The case of *Prinos* Offshore Platform Complex Re-use**
K. Bounia, K.A. Liapi..... 1845
- **Investigation of surface temperature fluctuation inside urban canyons**
A. Dimoudi, A. Kantzioura, S. Zoras, P. Kosmopoulos..... 1855
- **Ecological evaluation of building deconstruction and component reuse**
X. Gong..... 1864
- **Compact City: Experience of H.K and its inspiration for the urbanization of China**
S.N. Gong, Y.K. Zhang, S.N. Yuan, X.L. Gong, R. Zhang..... 1870
- **Causes and impacts of urban drainage congestion in Chittagong City, Bangladesh**
M.M. Islam, M.I. Sarwar..... 1877
- **Environmental and traffic safety considerations in urban street design**
A.Mouratidis, F. Kehagia, K.Mouratidis..... 1888
- **A problematic approach to education and participation of local people in municipal solid waste management in Serbia**
M. Nenkovic-Riznic, S. Milijic, B. Josimovic..... 1895
- **Investigating influences of urban form on household energy consumption: trade-off issues between transportation and residential energy consumption**
C.T. Yeh..... 1905
- **Existing building integrated photovoltaic in cities**
W. Zhang, Y.K. Zhang, R. Zhang..... 1915

Green Architecture & Urban Design

- **Green roofs, urban greening and resilience: A framework for evaluation**
K. Bartkowicz and J. Rogers..... 1924
- **The impact of housing zone design on global climate change**
N.Ç. Erkan, E.Ö. Aktuğlu Aktan..... 1934
- **Reanimating open space: The environmental transformation of a coastal node in Thessaloniki**
N. Kalogirou, T. Chatzigiannopoulos, Z. Karakinari, A.C. Syrakoy, A. Tzaka, A. Vartholomaïos, D. Zavraka..... 1942
- **Urban microclimate and thermal comfort conditions in the urban center of Thessaloniki**
A. Kantzioura, P. Kosmopoulos, A. Papadopoulos..... 1951
- **Investigation of urban microclimate in urban open spaces at a Greek medium-sized city**
M. Makropoulou, A. Gospodini..... 1959

- **Microclimate Conditions of the Urban Open Spaces at the densely built central area in a Greek City**
M. Makropoulou, A. Gospodini 1972
- **Benefits of traditional architecture: energy simulation performance evaluation of a tobacco warehouse building**
K. Nikolaidou, S. Zoras, A. Dimoudi 1986
- **Outdoor Thermal Comfort Assessment of educational precincts during spring time in Melbourne Australia**
S. Shooshtarian, U. Iyer-Raniga, I. Ridly, M.M. Andamon 1995
- **Retrofitting of existing building stock – an architectural challenge on all scales**
W. Unterrainer 2005
- **Climatic urban design strategies for the Mediterranean**
A. Vartholomaïos 2016
- **The organic integration of road traffic and photovoltaic system**
Z. Yukun, H. Dan, Z. Rui 2025

Transportation Planning and Policy in cities

- **Urban public transport adaptation in Rome**
L. Barbieri 2036
- **Planning the infrastructure corridors and their importance for the urban development adaptability - example of Belgrade**
J. Basarić, O. Bakić, S. Milijić 2045
- **Application of Policy-Led Multi-Criteria Analysis to the Appraisal of the Northern Line Extension (NLE) in London**
H.T. Dimitriou, M. Dean, E.J. Ward and P.G. Wright 2052
- **Car dependency versus bike-sharing: a new sustainable urban transport mode for Konya, Kayseri and İstanbul cases from Turkey**
C. Erçetin 2068
- **How can a university campus transport be planned on the basis of ‘cycling as a campus transport mode’: case of Middle East Technical University from Ankara, Turkey**
C. Erçetin 2077
- **The rediscovery of cycling in Norway**
H. Fiskaa 2088
- **Path dependence to path development: Urban transport policies in New Zealand**
M. Imran and J. Pearce 2099
- **Mobility in the capital cities Vienna and Bratislava as well as their surrounding regions forming a growing economic agglomeration**
O. Roïder, S. Riegler, R. Klementschtz 2110
- **Transport Interchange Design: Analyzing the case of the New Railway Station of Thessaloniki**
M. Tsami, G. Adamos and E. Nathanail 2121
- **Public perception of sustainable mobility in times of austerity. The case of Piraeus**
A. Vassi, F. Vlastou, K. Athanasopoulos and Th. Vlastos 2129

Urban Planning Laws, Real Estate & Property Rights

- **Back to the Future: What an urban transformation approach being suggested makes us think**
Y. Bektas, A. Sakarya, N. Kilinc 2139
- **Landfills in Vitória, Brazil: choices and outcomes**
J.F.B. Freitas 2149

- **Seismic prevention as value: a Web-GIS technical-economic valuation pattern to support the security policies**
S. Giuffrida, C. Tocci, F. Gagliano..... 2159
- **A methodology of community development in large-scale housing development — Perspective from housing developers and consultancy companies —**
N. Kawabata, S. Kawahara..... 2169
- **Urban planning: An integrated decision support system**
J. Marques, P. Batista, M. Borges, E. Castro..... 2179
- **Urban and environmental conflicts in Itatiaia (State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) - Reflections about the reviewing process of its urban legislation**
I. Silveira, J. Rodrigues..... 2188

Urban Economies & spatial impacts

- **Views of the city. Barcelona as an urban laboratory**
I. Aquilué and E. Roca 2199
- **Economic dynamics in the city centre of Oporto (Portugal)**
C.M.F. Ferreira, T.S. Marques..... 2209
- **Flexible Economic Opportunism: Reinterpreting Western Urbanization in an Asian Context**
K. Hartley..... 2220
- **Urban planning in the modern context of the economy market Comparison study in Athens and Berlin**
A. Loupis 2230
- **Rethinking the Pyramid: the reconstruction of the contemporary urban system**
T. Michailidis, K. Serraos 2240
- **Urban functional mutation, transformation and factors influencing cities**
S. Mozuriunaite..... 2247
- **An insight towards perceptions over contemporary public space: influencing connotations, culture and practices**
T. Sanli, T. Townshend, I. Thompson..... 2257
- **Tiered growth program promoting housing related infill development? – Analysis of city of San Diego’s housing development 1980 to 2020**
T. Sipila, H. Falkenbach, and K. Viitanen..... 2270
- **Sporadic spatial implosion/condensation in Athens**
A. Stratou..... 2280
- **From a post-industrial city to a productive city**
Y.K. Zhang, J. Zheng..... 2289

Place Marketing & City Branding, tourism development

- **Old Doha in Qatar; Back to the Future; Cultural heritage, urban regeneration and sustainability**
D. Boussaa and S. Garba..... 2300
- **The role of the museum in post-industrial European cities; flagship architecture, urban renewal and redevelopment schemes**
Ch.Kanakidou..... 2310
- **Traditional settlements and the architecture of tourism. The case of Santorini**
D. Monioudi-Gavala..... 2322
- **Polis Painting: The creation of a City Image based on Narrative, Urban Analysis and Fine Art principles**
E. Tsakiri..... 2331

Shrinking cities

- **Shrinking cities of Southern Russia: Specifics of the shrinkage pattern**
E. Batunova 2342
- **Is Athens a case of shrinking city?**
F. Karantza, V. Kondyli 2352
- **A Study on the Effect of Raymond Unwin`s Theory on Hajime Seki`s Garden City Idea**
K. Kawano 2362
- **POPULATION DYNAMICS: Economic crisis & Shrinking Greek cities**
S. Manika, E. Anastasiou 2368
- **The urban transformation in the historical center of Rio de Janeiro from the 80s to the Olympic city**
E. Petti Pinheiro 2377

Smart cities

- **Planning in the Era of Information and Communication Technologies. Discussing the “label: Smart” in South-European cities with environmental and socio-economic challenges**
R. Battarra, A. Galderisi, G. Pappalardo, D.A. Boiano and J.S. Oliva 2388
- **“Smart City” applications in contemporary urban redevelopment schemes**
V. Galani 2397
- **Smart City, Metropolitan Areas and Competitiveness: the case study of Florence**
C. Gargiulo, R. Battarra and M.R. Tremiterra 2408
- **Sustainable urban mobility towards smart mobility: the case study of Bari area, Italy**
R. Papa, R. Niglio, P.P. Comitale 2418
- **Investigation study for the “smart-art” project of Thessaloniki as an innovation-strategy element for the promotion of art and culture**
O. Psomadaki, G. Kalliris, P. Tsarchopoulos, G. Paschalidis 2431
- **Application of the Urban Well-Being Index in the city of Conchal-SP, Brazil**
A.M.G. Sperandio, A.T.C. Dias, E. Favero, L.L. Francisco, T. Manfrinato, T.P. Mattos 2438

Multicultural societies, socio-spatial inequalities, place identity, & urban planning

- **Towards a more inclusive city: Assessing a decade of habitat policy in Bogota, Colombia**
J. Bula 2445
- **Crossing Boundaries: The Transference of Informal Economic Patterns from Developing to Developed Countries, Lessons from San Diego, CA**
M. Bussell, J. Bliesner 2453
- **Diversity and segmentation in Melbourne, Australia: A case study of a successful multicultural 'global city'**
V. Colic-Peisker 2464
- **Analysing the residential isolation and its determinants for foreign communities in the Montréal metropolitan region**
G. Marois, S. Lord 2472
- **Addressing needs of deprived Roma settlements in Slovakia: innovative tools and challenges for urban planning**
K. Smatanová 2485
- **Built heritage protection and the sustainable city: perspectives for sustainable multicultural development in Xanthi and Komotini**
P.K. Sofianou 2496

Author index 2507

Subject index 2513

Sponsors 2523

The power of fiction in times of crisis: movie-tourism and heritage planning in “Montalbano’s places”

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Abstract

The current economic crisis, and its effects on the European sovereign debt, has resulted in a significant reduction in Italian investments in the field of preservation and enhancement of cultural heritage and landscape. In fragile contexts, such as Sicily, the contraction of investments has put further into crisis the already weak management and planning system. Despite this scenario of crisis, in South-Eastern Sicily, the province of Ragusa shows a significant resilience to the crisis also due to the "effect Montalbano" and the capability to rethink the traditional heritage policies (Magazzino & Mantovani, 2012). The paper, based on the analysis of the case study of South-East Sicily, reflects on these potential and conflictive elements generated by relationship between cine-tourism and local policies.

Keywords: Heritage management; tourism; cultural policies; South-Eastern Sicily.

1. INTRODUCTION

As the economic crisis continues, affecting the European sovereign debts, in Italy the resources allocated to the protection and enhancement of cultural heritage and activities and landscape have fallen from 0.3% of GDP in 2009 to 0.17% of GDP in 2012. Such a drastic reduction has however to face a very large heritage, in Italy, where complex objectives of protection and preservation, economic development, enhancement and promotion (Causi and Mazzanti, 2002) are combined with complex institutions where various players have administrative, management and economic responsibilities (Leon and Tuccini, 2011). In addition to the important reduction in public expenditure allocated to cultural heritage management, the local administrations' expenditure (Regional, Provincial and Municipal administrations) has been partially cut as well, although they made up for the reduced public investments.

As shown by the Bes Annual Report 2013 (ISTAT, 2014) local administrations accounted for about two thirds of the public expenditure for cultural activities, by allocating their own resources independently. In 2011, local authorities invested 4.21 billion euros in the field, while receiving only 0.31 billion euros from the central government. On a national level, the local authorities' action served as a cushion for the management of the cultural heritage, while region-wise the situation is much more dramatic. As clearly shown in the table below (Table 1), in the period 2009-2013 Sicily's expenditure in cultural activities and in environment protection and enhancement declined by 46.5%. During the recession phase of the business cycle, Sicily's total expenditure in cultural heritage decreased from 510,811,473 euros in 2009 to 237,619,836 euros in 2013¹.

In such a fragile territory as Sicily, the shrinkage of investments further weakened the already poor instruments of heritage management and planning namely in the field of “Protection of nature, environmental heritage, parks and nature reserves” as the expenditure dropped from 138,180,789 euros in 2009 to 47,592,381 euros in 2013.

* Although the article should be considered a result of the common work and reflections of the three authors, A. Giampino took primary responsibility for sections 1 and 4, V. Todaro took primary responsibility for sections 2 and 3, F. Lo Piccolo took primary responsibility for section 5.

¹ These figures refer to the expenditure items per function, with respect to the “Organisation of culture and the related structures” and to the “Protection of nature, environmental heritage, parks and nature reserves”.

Table 1. Sicily’s expenditure in cultural activities and in environment protection and enhancement

Year	Organisation of culture and the related structures (euros)	Protection of nature, environmental heritage, parks and nature reserves (euros)	Total expenditure in cultural heritage (euros)
2009	372,630,684	138,180,789	510,811,473
2010	250,708,966	44,307,393	295,016,359
2011	279,559,964	85,219,140	364,799,104
2012	168,238,513	43,739,873	211,830,894
2013	190,027,455	47,592,381	237,619,813

Despite the crisis scenario, South-Eastern Sicily performed well in terms of tourist arrivals and heritage enhancement policies, due to what has been named the “Montalbano effect” (Magazzino and Mantovani, 2012) as we will explain hereafter. The paper, based on the analysis of the case study of South-Eastern Sicily (Fig. 1), reflects on these potential and conflictive elements. Some conflicts, in particular, are reflected in the need to reconcile opposing interests expressed by the different (public and private) involved parties; other conflicts are generated by instruments for cultural heritage protection (landscape planning) - on one hand - and urban development policies - on the other. Not only conflicts, but also opportunities that translate into new action models for cultural heritage enhancement, in a time characterized by a significant reduction in public funding.



Figure 1. The Province of Ragusa in Sicily

2. THE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE SOUTH-EASTERN SICILY

The ongoing severe economic crisis is reducing public investments in natural and cultural heritage. South-Eastern Sicily features an exceptionally high concentration of natural and cultural heritage, which on one side makes it greatly exposed to the risk of deterioration, due to the decreasing resources allocated to protection and preservation interventions, but, on the other, it is very attractive for the potential synergies that can be activated especially with respect to private investments. Furthermore, this heritage has shaped over time a historically stratified cultural landscape that has been the setting to several prestigious film productions, among which the TV series “The Inspector Montalbano” stands out.

From a geomorphologic perspective, the territory under study unfolds around the plateau of the

Hyblaean Mountains, which is dominated by the large and flat Mount Lauro (850 m a.s.l.). Over the centuries, the human activity developed a complex cultural landscape around it that offers a “natural” scenic setting for filming.

Namely, this territory offers a number of different sets from rocky landscapes in the rural inland to golden beaches along the coastal dunes, to the sea. Despite the human presence widespread all over the territory, a number of environmental systems having an important natural value still exist. In addition to the habitats of the river mouths and environments, a large system of dunes spread along the coast, interspaced by marshes which are indeed wetlands not reclaimed at the beginning of last century.

Inland, typical “caves” spread out from the plateau of the Hyblaean Mountains. These are deep faults of great historic environmental and landscape value, characterized by steep rock walls and luxuriant valley bottoms. The large flat plateau features closed fields that make a unique and historically valuable agricultural landscape characterized by large farms and dry stone walls that demarcate the fields where seed and woody crops are grown, often along with olive, almond and carob trees.

The dry stone walls characterize the rural culture of the plateaux of Modica and Ragusa, and they also represent an important link with the morphological elements of the territory (Giorgianni, 1978), while proving the deep knowledge of the stone culture stemming from medieval stone working. The inland landscape as well as the bare and dry countryside are the places where the Inspector Montalbano usually goes to reflect alone, and where he often intuitively finds the solutions to some of his investigations (Fig. 2).



Figure 2. The set of the Montalbano's beach in the beach of Santa Croce Camerina
(Source: <http://www.siciliafan.it/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/luca-zingaretti.jpg>)

Nonetheless, the most manifest features of this territory are the numberless intertwined and stratified systems of values and resources depending on one another. An intricate network of paths connects archaeological sites of the classical age, agricultural areas with farmhouses and large farms, and town centres, distorting and adapting to the morphology of the territory (Nifosi and Leone, 1985).

Indeed, the backgrounds of the Inspector Montalbano's undertakings are not only the natural environments along the coast or the inland rural landscape; also extraordinary urban landscapes that exploit the natural morphology of the territory or the ostentatious baroque architecture to create ideal scenic settings are often the background of the TV series scenes. The morphology of the

territory contributed to the creation of a complex and polycentric settlement scheme where small and medium-sized urban areas are scattered on the edge of calcarenitic terraces opening up toward the coast and creating breathtaking landscapes.

The small and medium-sized urban areas are strongly linked to the historic events that assigned to each of them specific functions within the system of the Hyblaean Mountains, establishing collaboration relations among them and with larger urban areas.

The town centres feature baroque architecture and urban style (Noto, Scicli, Rosolini, Modica, Ragusa, Ispica) and minor Italian Liberty style (Ispica, Canicattini Bagni).

In 1693, Sicily was hit by one of most devastating earthquakes ever that caused 93,000 deaths and the destruction of about 60 towns, which was followed, in the south-eastern part of the island (Val di Noto) by an unprecedented reconstruction wave. The Val di Noto became the largest construction site in Sicily, very unique on the international baroque scene, and characterized by a high concentration of towns – among which Caltagirone, Catania, Militello Val Catania, Modica, Noto, Palazzolo Acreide, Ragusa and Scicli – that were all partially or totally reconstructed at the same time. The new images of the towns, reorganized according to the baroque culture lines, exploit the natural difference in height of the territory to create a scenery effect that makes all the urban landscapes in the area similar and different at the same time. The façades of palaces and churches, emphasized by wide and endless staircases and by shiny domes, appear as an unrivalled scenic background towering above the low-rise and compact buildings underneath. These exceptionally beautiful urban landscapes perfectly express the baroque idea of urban-planning where architecture, space and light merge and reach maximum harmony. It is here, among them, that the preferred locations for filming the scenes of the Montalbano series are “chosen”. After all, this scenic effect best expresses the most specific features of baroque architecture, which emerged suddenly and spread extensively during the 18th century (Blunt, 1968) in South-Eastern Sicily, a territory considered as geographical and cultural periphery (Nobile, 1990).

3. TOURIST FLOWS AND DEVELOPMENT FACTORS

There are essentially two factors that encouraged the city of Ragusa and, more in general, South-Eastern Sicily to enhance its cultural heritage and boost its image with respect to culture and tourism. The first one is linked to the intense recovery process implemented through the special Regional Law 61/1981, later re-funded through the Regional Law 7/1990, which allowed to begin the recovery of the centre of Ragusa Ibla. All the recovery actions and the urban and construction regeneration interventions carried out according to the law provisions resulted in the opening of many new hospitality facilities. The second factor promoted by the Agencies for Cultural and Environmental Heritage of Siracusa and Catania, joined later also by the city of Ragusa, consists in the “construction” of the unitary territorial image of the “Late baroque cities”. Such image of the territory, based on the recognition of baroque architecture and urban-planning as a unifying identity value attracting tourists and visitors, inspired the cultural enhancement policies that were implemented in the period 1990-2000. Among them, in 2002, the “late baroque cities of Val di Noto” (Noto, Scicli, Ragusa, Militello Val di Catania, Caltagirone, Palazzolo Acreide, Catania, Modica) were listed as UNESCO World Heritage sites, and the South-East Cultural District “Late baroque cities of Val di Noto” (financed in 2009 by the Regional Operational Plan of Sicily 2000-2006, Measure 2.02.d) was established with the purpose of implementing the management plan of the UNESCO site.

If we look at the products, services and facilities for tourists, Ragusa has deeply changed its territorial profile over the last twenty years. Namely two main trends have been recorded: new accommodation facilities have been developed, from hotels and holiday villages only to a wide range of large, medium and small-sized facilities, and they are now evenly spread throughout the territory, while in past being exclusively located along the coast. Over the last ten years, accommodation facilities other than hotels, mainly farm accommodations and B&Bs, have had a consistent and significant positive trend: in the period 2012-2013, 206 new facilities came into

operation.

Concerning tourist flows, a few surveys carried out in this field (Mantovani, 2010; Magazzino and Mantovani, 2012) and crossing various basic data², clearly show that in the period 2000-2008, tourist arrivals and overnight stays in the Province of Ragusa, if compared to Sicily, increased by 5.00% and 5.80% with respect to the period 1990-1999, when they were 4.50% and 5.20% respectively. However, although the decline in tourist flows in the province of Ragusa is lower than in other cities of Sicily or Italy, if we look at the same indicators for the following periods, some negative values were recorded in the periods 2009-2010 and 2012-2013. Actually, given the broader scenario of the international crisis that is also affecting tourism, in general South-Eastern Sicily seems to maintain positive figures.

Concerning the country of origin, more Italian than international visitors used to go to Ragusa: until 2009, the latter accounted for one third of the former. However, such a difference has been dropping since 2010: in 2013, foreign visitors were 72,354, while Italian visitors were 128,555.

In 2013, the most popular countries of origin were France (22,667), Germany (8,523), USA (5,169), England (4,950) and Switzerland (4,738). The extremely rich natural and cultural heritage, stratified landscape, numberless city centres of great value, high quality food and wine products make this area different from other territories.

Furthermore, although we cannot argue that “The Inspector Montalbano” is directly responsible for the steady performances of tourist flows, it is undeniable that the TV series showed the territory and the landscapes of South-Eastern Sicily successfully and made them known in the world.

Indeed, over the last few years, many tourists went to see the so-called “places of Montalbano”. The Inspector’s house located on the beach of Punta Secca, in the territory of Santa Croce Camerina, has been transformed into "La casa di Montalbano" B&B. The town hall of Scicli that in the TV series is home to the police station, has been moved to a different venue (Fig. 3).



Figure 3. The set of the Montalbano's police station in the Scicli's city hall
(Source: http://gogreensicily.blogspot.it/2012_08_01_archive.html)

In the light of this phenomenon, and of the misrepresentation that inevitably comes with it, it should be however pointed out that tourism is a recently emerged opportunity for the territory of Ragusa that needs well-structured strategies and enhanced consolidation (Azzolina et al., 2012). In this territory, the tourist districts were initially established with a spirit of cooperation and they are currently nothing but an aggregation of municipalities unable to express a «unitary vision of the territory of the South-East» (Azzolina et al., 2012, p.161). Moreover, the supply of tourist services is based on a traditional model of tourism, which is fully focused on accommodation facilities and

² Specifically, this is a study based on an index that combines tourist density and specialisation.

catering services. Such a model features extremely poor innovation with respect to the key role of cultural heritage, despite a very strong national and international competitiveness in the market of cultural destinations for tourists. In particular, services and infrastructures (including technological ones) prove to be inadequate both in the private and public sector.

4. THE “MONTALBANO EFFECT” AND THE CULTURAL HERITAGE ENHANCEMENT POLICIES: OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS

The Italian TV series “The Inspector Montalbano” based on the novels written by Andrea Camilleri has firstly generated an increase in tourist flows to South-Eastern Sicily in the period 1999-2007, and then contributed to limit the recession trend in the period 2007-2013 if compared to the regional figures. As noted by Mantovani (2010, p. 84), by analysing the tourism development index, the Montalbano effect

«continued also throughout the international economic crisis that started in 2007, because the decline in the tourist flows in Ragusa was lower than elsewhere. Until 1999, the tourism development indexes of Ragusa and Sicily featured a common increasing curve, if compared to Italy's. After 1999, the Ragusa's index increased much more than Sicily's. In 2007, the indexes declined due to the crisis; nonetheless the Ragusa's index continued to be higher than the Sicily's index despite it recorded a higher percentage drop than the latter».

However, the Montalbano effect not only boosted tourism, but also called for a review of the local policies aiming at enhancing the cultural heritage through the promotion of film tourism. Despite being controversial as a way to promote tourism, it undeniably brings important elements of innovation to dwell on, if we wish to review our cultural heritage enhancement and protection policies in a post-crisis scenario characterized by an increasing decline in public investments.

In 1999, Palomar produced the TV series “The Inspector Montalbano” for the Italian RAI TV channel, based on the novels written by Andrea Camilleri and set in the Sicilian territories of the province of Ragusa. The successful TV series was broadcasted until 2013 in Italy and in 18 countries³ on RAI International, and attracted international tourist flows to the weak South-Eastern Sicily. Ragusa, Scicli, Santa Croce Camerina, just to mention a few places where the TV series was filmed, became destinations for visitors wishing to see the places of baroque Sicily shown by the series⁴. The success of the TV series and the resulting benefits for the territory were officially recognized in 2007.

Indeed, by passing the Regional Law 16/2007, the Sicily Region set up the “Regional fund for cinema and audiovisual industry” managed by the regional councillorship for cultural heritage, environment and education, aimed at encouraging cinema and audiovisual productions in Sicily. The *Sicily Region Film Commission* was also established and entrusted with the management of the aforesaid fund⁵. The said law introduced at least two elements of innovation, although problematic, with respect to conventional heritage promotion policies. Firstly, the image conveyed by the media has been recognised as capable of promoting the cultural heritage. Indeed, the law sets out that a number of scenes must be shot in given places, be they individual buildings or landscapes, in order to promote and disseminate the image and the knowledge of Sicily.

Nonetheless, this formal recognition entails some ambiguity and weaknesses. Initially, the rush to offer locations for the TV series triggered a competition among municipalities, rather than

³ The TV series was broadcasted in Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Lithuania, Poland, Czech Republic, United Kingdom, Romania, Russia, Spain, USA, Sweden and Hungary.

⁴ Ragusa, Modica and Scicli are the places where most indoor and outdoor scenes were filmed. However, the TV series has promoted the whole territory of the province of Ragusa and its scattered heritage. Worth mentioning are Villa Salina in Scoglitti and the Eremo della Giubiliana in Ragusa, Villa Fagotto in Chiaramonte Gulfi and the Castle of Donnafugata.

⁵ Film tourism promotion policies were made possible by the Bassanini Law and the modification of Title V of the Italian Constitution that broadened the regional administrations' legislative powers. In 2001, the EU officially recognised the cultural value of film production and, as a result, national and regional administrations can now adopt measures supporting film and audiovisual production, by way of derogation from the general principles of competition established by the European Treaty.

encouraging the drafting of a policy aimed at enhancing the cultural system of the Hyblaean Mountains as a whole. Following the recession phase of the business cycle and, at the same time, the cut in municipal resources, the local authorities understood the need/urgency for setting up partnerships for the promotion of the cultural heritage through films.

As a result, on February 11th 2015, the municipalities of the Province of Ragusa⁶ signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the coordination and planning of the activities to be carried out in the period 2015-2017 to support the production of the TV series “The Inspector Montalbano”, thus identifying common interventions and actions. As specified in the Memorandum of Understanding, the Municipalities will enter into a partnership agreement with the purpose of finding the financial resources for the TV production, as well as selecting and promoting the cultural heritage of South-Eastern Sicily. This document also marks the shift from the fragmented policies implemented by the municipalities in field of cultural heritage, to a cooperative approach addressing the whole cultural system of the Province of Ragusa.

Concerning the cultural heritage enhancement policies, if, on one side, the image conveyed by the media produced such a change in the public bodies’ action models, on the other, the ambiguity of the power of the image that conveys an ideal reality inconsistent with the actual situation becomes manifest. The pristine coastal landscape with sandy dunes described in the TV series does not mirror the reality of the coasts in South-Eastern Sicily (Fig. 4). Unauthorised constructions, the anthropogenic load due to the presence of holiday homes and hotels, as well as production structures and infrastructures have transformed the coast of the Province of Ragusa into a fragile habitat which is highly jeopardized.

According to a survey carried out to investigate urbanisation in Sicily, within the framework of the activities instrumental to the drafting of the Regional Plan, 80.5% of the urbanised areas along the coasts of Ragusa within 150m from the shoreline and as many as 88.6% of the buildings built in the strip between 150 and 500m from the shoreline do not comply with urban planning regulations (Trombino, 2005)⁷.

These figures show the conflict nature of the Sicilian case, where cultural heritage protection and enhancement policies seem to move in the opposite direction of urban-planning policies (Fig. 5).

As to the most recent policies adopted to enhance the cultural heritage and boost the tourist offer in South-Eastern Sicily, related to the so-called “Montalbano effect”, they clearly show little interest in the protection of the coast and, more in general, of the territory, which should be, on the contrary, the starting point to foster the economic recovery of the area through film tourism. As specified in the Memorandum of Understanding recently signed by the municipalities of the Province of Ragusa, the local authorities decided to allocate resources to support the film production and to implement new methods for the enhancement of the city centres and individual buildings. Nonetheless, concerning urban-planning and territory protection policies, the municipalities should activate cooperative actions for the protection of the territory and the landscape that indeed attract both tourists and film productions.

⁶ The Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the municipalities of Ragusa, Acate, Chiaromonte Gulfi, Comiso, Giarratana, Ispica, Modica, Monterosso Almo, Pozzallo, Santa Croce Camerina, Scicli and Vittoria.

⁷ The Regional Law no. 78 of 1976 set out the prohibition, in Sicily, to build within 150m from the shoreline and it anticipated the national law no. 431 of 1985 setting the same prohibition within 300m from the shoreline. If applied correctly, this law would have prevented the booming of urbanisation along the Sicilian coasts soon afterward (after 1976, the buildings built within the 150m strip accounted for about 64.8% of the total coastal buildings) (ARTA, 2002).

However, the ambiguity of the law - the constraint was applicable provided that it was transposed in the general town-planning scheme - not only fostered construction activity, but also slowed down the creation of urban-planning instruments. If we also consider the subsequent amnesties (Law no. 724 of 1994) and regularisations (Regional Law no. 37 of 1985), we get a clear picture of the controversial situation in which urbanisation developed along the coasts of Sicily.



Figure 4. The real “set” of the Montalbano's house in Punta Secca (Santa Croce Camerina)
 (Source: <http://cronachemaceratesi.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Sicilia-la-casa-dove-girano-i-gialli-del-commissario-Montalbano-Andrea.jpg>)

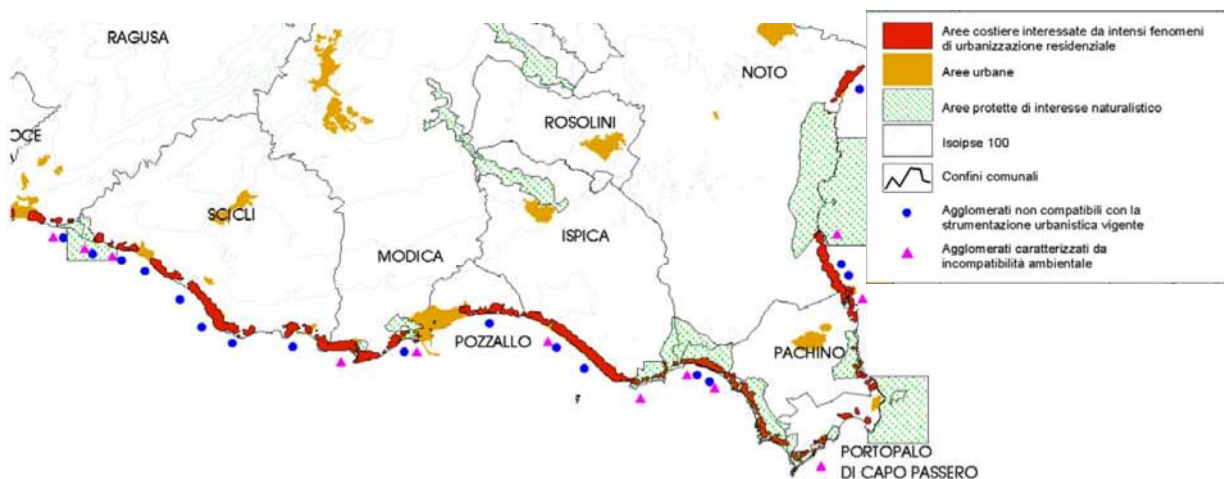


Figure 5. Urbanised areas along the coasts of the province of Ragusa (Source: Trombino, 2005)

The second aspect to be taken into consideration is the possibility to establish public-private partnerships for the promotion of the cultural heritage, with a significant reduction of public investments in this sector. The Regional Law 16/2007 grants a non-returnable aid to film production⁸, provided that “local human resources are used” (actors, trainees, workforce etc.) and that a given amount of the Sicilian territory and its buildings are filmed (20% of total outdoor filming and at least 30% of total filming of the finally edited film). From the viewpoint of cultural heritage promotion, this is a form of co-funding of the territorial marketing actions, which otherwise would be paid by public bodies only. The said public-private partnership is further confirmed by the 2015 Memorandum of Understanding that sets out the commitment of municipal administrations and, at the same time, the commitment of Palomar company to transforming the public goods made available by the municipalities into permanent exhibition spaces to be managed jointly. It is quite clear that in a time characterized by a severe economic crisis, film production represents an

⁸ The fund contributions are allocated based on the weeks of filming in Sicily. Three contributions per year can be allocated, from a maximum total amount of 250,000 euros if filming lasts for more than three weeks to a minimum amount of 10,000 euros if it lasts less than one week.

effective instrument for cultural heritage enhancement, while the “Montalbano effect” urges the public subjects to review the management and enhancement of the heritage in South-Eastern Sicily. However, this shift was also the result of the ongoing recession which caused a region-wise reduction in the funding set by Regional Law no. 16 of 2007, and the need to adopt emergency measures to maintain the TV series in Sicily, in addition to the implementation of the aforesaid Memorandum of Understanding⁹.

5. CONCLUSIONS

A number of scholars have been studying the impact of film and TV production on tourism. These surveys mostly focused on the influence of the images of the places used for filming, and on the tourism-related decision-making process (Schofield, 1996; Hudson and Ritchie, 2006a; 2006b; Soliman, 2011). Conversely, little attention has been paid in literature to the impact of films on planning and on the policies for the promotion of the cultural heritage of the filming locations. From this perspective, the case study of South-Eastern Sicily illustrated in this paper clearly shows that film tourism has a strong impact on the territory and on the cultural heritage and the subjects managing it. Shifting our focus from the tourists visiting those locations to the cultural heritage used as background for TV and film production, the connections and effects on planning and cultural heritage management represent an extremely interesting field of study, as demonstrated by this paper.

The outcomes of the case study of South-Eastern Sicily show that, in a time of crisis of public funding in which conventional action models and cultural heritage planning can no longer be applied, the so-called “Montalbano effect” has had at least a twofold positive impact:

- stable performances of the tourism industry related to cultural heritage in South-Eastern Sicily, even during the recession phase;
- a change in the cultural heritage management and enhancement models, resulting in improved collaboration among the public subjects involved, as well as public and private stakeholders in order to maximize the resources allocated to the sector.

Concerning the first point, the province of Ragusa, in the region of Sicily, shows a revealing resilience to the crisis which affects also tourism, as demonstrated by the presence of visitors, especially foreign ones, over time. Indeed, the decline in tourist flows recorded in Ragusa is lower than in Sicily and in Italy in general. However, over the last ten years, accommodation facilities other than hotels, mainly farm accommodations and B&Bs, have had a consistent and significant positive trend. As a result, the number of accommodation facilities in this territory has been increasing considerably. Nonetheless, there is a very weak, or sometimes even inexistent, system strategy aimed at directing tourist flows and the tourist demand towards a more sustainable, responsible and innovative tourism. In particular, the current offer relies on a short and fragmented supply chain featuring extremely poor innovation with respect to the key role of cultural heritage and system services. Nonetheless a very strong national and international competitiveness does exist in the market of cultural destinations for tourists.

Concerning the second point given above and considering the economic synergy between public and private funding, with respect to the promotion of film tourism Soliman (2011) suggested to introduce forms of free taxation and special incentives for film production, rather than relying on “emergency” actions or indiscriminate incentives to film production, as they have been doing in the territories of Ragusa. Nevertheless, this may be viable for intangible resources to support film production, but not for tangible policies defining natural and cultural heritage protection and enhancement interventions. As previously said, in a time of economic crisis, there are no resources

⁹ The limited economic support provided by the region to the TV series caused in 2014 a confrontation between the management of Palomar and the regional governor Crocetta. Given the hypothesis of moving the setting of the TV series to the Puglia region, the region of Sicily passed a bill for the “Interventions aimed at supporting the production of audiovisual series having a cyclical and continuative nature”, which was nicknamed the Montalbano bill by the media. The bill sets out the granting of a funding of 50,000.00 euros for every 45-minute episode of film productions and TV series that have been programmed and broadcasted over the last 3 years, as well as an overall expenditure of 200,000 euros.

specially dedicated to the natural and cultural heritage and the “need for touristic return” compels to accept that the images of the TV series prevail over the reality of places.

These are the first attempts of innovation in the field of cultural heritage, and in order for them to be effective, as stated by Connell and Meyer (2009), they should not cause any cultural or environmental damage to the heritage, but rather protect it even more.

In this respect, the data of the Sicilian case study show, on one side, some interest in the protection of the architectural historical heritage and, on the other, little attention to the territories and the landscapes which are not included in the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the municipalities of South-Eastern Sicily. At the same, as we have underlined in the previous paragraph, urban-planning policies poorly interact with territorial and environmental heritage protection and enhancement policies, and sometimes they even turn out to be opposite to them.

Given the current shrinkage of public expenditure in such a strategic sector for the development of weak areas like Sicily's ones, the promotion of film production sounds like a historical need rather than a choice for innovation. However, the opportunities to enhance the cultural heritage resulting from film tourism are indeed opportunities to review the conventional public policy that, in spite of the economic crisis, has shown limits and poor effectiveness.

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