

CONSERVING RURAL ARCHITECTURE IN GREECE IN LIGHT OF THE NEW TENDENCY FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURIST DEVELOPMENT

The present paper, produced in April 2007, is the result of a research made for the placement for the course MA in Conservation Studies of the University of York, within the program of "Sustainable development for the Aegean Sea" of the Elliniki Etairia. It focused on the search for model examples of the growth of agrotourism as a motivation for the restoration and re-use of historical buildings.

Introduction

One of the most important factors of the economy in Greece is Tourism. Already from the 60-70's it has been adopted as the golden solution for the financial problems that had forced the population of the countryside to national and international immigration. The high speed of growth in the number of visitors and the lack in programming and planning opened the way to institutions and privates who were seeking tricks for easy wealth. Therefore the opportunity turned into a wound and that is why now it is a fertile era for a different approach of the tourist product. Answer to the saturation, for some years now, is the research and growth of sustainable development plans which, with respect to the nature, the ambient and the historic and cultural heritage could turn out profitable and effective in the long run.

For over 40 years, as the examples in other European countries have proven, one of the most successful tourist development models is agrotourism. Lately efforts are being made for its growth on the Hellenic territory which, in seaside and mountainside areas, offers rich and various natural and historical environments. There are multiple sides of development of this alternative model of tourism as one can derive from the definition of the Greek Centre for Agrotourism:

«Agrotourism is the parallel development of activities which aim at the economical and social upgrading of agricultural areas and the periphery by sustaining local agricultural production, commerce, low profile and low bids for tourist facilities as well as the promotion of the natural and cultural heritage of each area». ¹

In the present study we wish to present an overview of the positive effects on the way cultural heritage was promoted, especially regarding the architectural heritage as this is presented on the Internet. For this purpose a research was made of agricultural accommodations, the creation of which

¹ Askeli S., *Επιχειρήστε αγροτουριστικά* [Try agrotourism], Athens, Kerkira, 2005, p. 18.
Buletinul Cercurilor Științifice Studențești, 14, 2008, p. 158-162

turned out to be an opportunity for the restoration and reuse of historical buildings.

The research

To begin with, those tourist accommodations in Greece which cover the subject of the study were looked for in the various Greek web sites, as agrotouristic and included in traditional “listed” buildings.

The characterization “agrotouristic accommodation” goes for enterprises which cover and sustain:²

- Low and small scale tourist facilities
- Local agricultural production
- Creation and commerce of traditional products
- Cultural and Natural heritage of the area

The first level results were gathered and presented in table “Statistic View of the Research”. Among the 51 prefectures of Greece, 35 examples were found and distributed as follows:

- 25 prefectures with 1-5 accommodations
- 4 prefectures with 6-10 accommodations
- 4 prefectures with 11-20 accommodations
- 1 prefectures with 31-40 accommodations
- 1 prefectures with 41-50 accommodations

Conclusion

Ever since the constitution of Greece as an independent country in 1830, a kind of contempt prevailed for local popular architecture, scarifying historical continuity for the adoration of the ancient culture.³ The first hesitant steps towards changing this view and reevaluating buildings created after 1453 are made in some studies from 1930 onwards.⁴ In any case, only after the political changeover of 1974 important changes are enacted through article 24 of the Constitution, the adoption of international regulations, the constitution of relative institutions and their interaction with international committees for the protection of natural and cultural heritage.

Unfortunately, despite the change in local as well as in European politics over the last 30 years, destructions kept happening, always in the name of misconceived “evolution”. For this very reason it is crucial that this new opportunity, which grew from the search for a qualitative recovery of the

² www.agrotravel.gr.

³ G.P. Lavvas, *Θεσμική προστασία της ελληνικής παραδοσιακής Αρχιτεκτονικής: Φάσεις-Αντιφάσεις-Κίνδυνοι* [Institutional protection of traditional Greek architecture: Phases - Inconsistencies - Risks], Thessaloniki, University Studio Press, 1983, p. 126.

⁴ Ch. Bouras, *Οι βασικές αρχές προστασίας της αρχιτεκτονικής κληρονομίας και η διαχρονική εξέλιξη τους στην Ελλάδα* [Basic rules for protection of architectural heritage and their diachronic evolution in Greece], 2007, www.nomosphysis.org/articles.php.

country, be used as a new chance for the safeguarding of historical and cultural heritage.

The results in safeguarding buildings and urban complexes of the newborn agrotourism are already noticeable. In searching for the diversity of the saturated model of massive tourism, which has also proven disastrous for the natural and built environment, interventions are promoted based mainly on quality. Between Quality and Development, as Kagkarakis explains, there is an interdependence which, with proper management, may reduce expenses and increase income. We can therefore keep an optimistic view for these actions as guidelines towards the principle scope of changing the new tourist model and leading to the overall development of the country.

What should be absolutely avoided is reducing the need for preserving architectural heritage for the sake of development and the everyday needs of local population. It is of crucial importance to consider the methodology and philosophy lying under the reconstruction plan of an agrotouristic accommodation. By promoting the development and the continuity of life in the periphery these settlements obtain new breath and they grow along their era. Only in this way will the insidious pretext of mummifying an environment for selling it as traditional be avoided.⁵

In any case, the best way to preserve a building, as Feilden often repeats, is its continuous use, especially when it does not change the original use it was constructed for.⁶ It should also be underlined that, while searching for the correct methods of conserving and restoring a building, the traditional methods of construction and the relative jobs are also preserved, as they actually tend to disappear because of the use of new techniques and materials.⁷

Using the programmed growth of agrotourism for safeguarding the architectural heritage is a duty - architectural heritage being the master expression of culture "and that because it creates the framework within which most human activities takes place and also because it expresses, in the most complete way, the interdependent relation of humans and their environment".⁸

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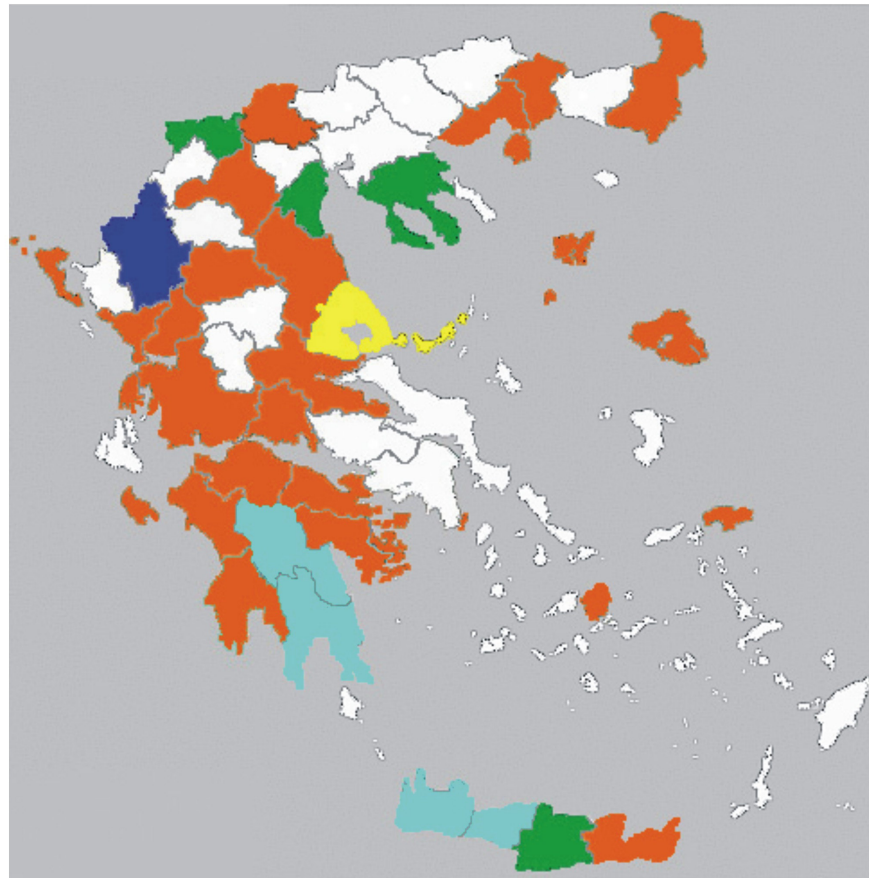
⁵ G. Schizas, *To Aigaiο δεν είναι πόλη. Και μακάρι να μην γίνει ποτέ* [The Aegean is not city. And if only it will never become], 2006, www.nomosphysis.org/articles.php.






⁶ B. Feilden, *The Principles of Conservation*, Washington, National Academy, 1982, p. 22-30.

⁷ K. Geraris, Έκθεση Νίκου Σηφουνάκη για την προστασία της Ευρωπαϊκής, Φυσικής, Αρχιτεκτονικής και Πολιτιστικής Κληρονομιάς της υπαίθρου και των νησιωτικών περιοχών (2006/2050) [The report of Nikos Sifounakis about the protection of the European, natural, architectonic and cultural inheritance of the countryside and of the insular regions, 2006/2050], www.nomosphysis.org.gr.

⁸ S. Kontaratos, *Αρχιτεκτονική και παράδοση* [Architecture and tradition], Athens, Kastaniotis, 1986, p. 69.

ΣΤΑΤΙΣΤΙΚΗ ΕΙΚΟΝΑ ΤΗΣ ΕΡΕΥΝΑΣ



	Νομοί με 1 - 5 καταλύματα
	Νομοί με 6 - 10 καταλύματα
	Νομοί με 11 - 20 καταλύματα
	Νομοί με 31 - 40 καταλύματα
	Νομοί με 41 - 50 καταλύματα

Η ΑΝΑΠΤΥΞΗ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΡΟΤΟΥΡΙΣΜΟΥ & Η ΔΙΑΣΩΣΗ ΤΗΣ ΤΟΠΙΚΗΣ ΑΡΧΙΤΕΚΤΟΝΙΚΗΣ ΚΛΗΡΟΝΟΜΙΑΣ



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΕΤΑΙΡΕΙΑ
για την προστασία του περιβάλλοντος και της πολιτιστικής κληρονομιάς
Πρόγραμμα για την
Αειφόρο Ανάπτυξη στο Αιγαίο

Λάουρα Μ. Ταπίνη

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CONSERVAREA ARHITECTURII RURALE ÎN GRECIA ÎN LUMINA NOII
TENDINȚE DE DEZVOLTARE TURISTICĂ DURABILĂ

Rezumat

Această lucrare realizează o trecere în revistă a impactului pozitiv al dezvoltării agroturismului asupra conservării arhitecturii rurale din Grecia. Lucrarea a avut ca metodă de lucru examinarea dezvoltării pensiunilor agroturistice, care s-au dovedit a fi oportunități de reutilizare a clădirilor istorice. Autoarea trece în revistă soarta moștenirii arhitectonice începând din secolul al XIX-lea, când clădirile construite după 1453 au fost tratate cu dispreț; o legislație europeană interesată în conservarea monumentelor istorice a început să fie pusă în aplicare din 1974. Autoarea discută impactul dezvoltării turistice asupra păstrării monumentelor arhitectonice și insistă asupra evitării situației de discriminare a monumentelor în favoarea ridicării unor edificii noi. La un nivel mai profund, păstrarea habitatului rural înseamnă păstrarea satelor vii, prin dezvoltarea agroturismului ca formă alternativă de sprijinire a vieții rurale, cea mai sigură formă de conservare a construcțiilor și a mediului în care au fost create și funcționat.

Keywords: Rural Architecture in Greece, Historical Buildings, Cultural Heritage, Agrotourism, Restoration.