

# **Patras, European Cultural Capital of 2006: a lost chance in urban development and planning context for the third largest Greek city**

**Eva Athanasopoulou**

*Civil Engineer – Regional Planner, Technical University of Western Greece  
e.athanasopoulou@keta-de.gr*

**Aris Sapounakis**

*Architect – Urban Designer, Associate Professor, Department of Planning and Regional Development, University of Thessaly  
sapounakis@gmail.com*

## **Abstract**

*The European Cultural Capital as an institution has evolved through the years since 1985 when it had been initially introduced. During this period its impact on the beneficiary cities has varied significantly ranging from the highly positive experience of Glasgow in 1990 to the cases of a number of unsuccessful paradigms across Europe. In many cases the organization of important events such as the Olympics or the European City/Capital of Culture has in certain occasions proven to operate as levers of urban and cultural regeneration. Yet, it has often been proven that such a nomination was not always particularly instrumental to development. The present paper examines the case of the Greek city of Patras which was the European Cultural Capital for the year 2006 while also hosting several activities of the 2004 Olympic Games.*

*The investigation of the manner in which the city of Patras has managed its nomination in view of the context of the time came to the conclusion that Patras has failed to benefit from the opportunity given by both the organization of the European City/Capital of Culture 2006 and the 2004 Olympics for a number of reasons. These reasons comprise the poor preparation and organization, the successive variation of people in responsible posts and especially the failure to actively involve the local community in the alleged cultural regeneration of the city. The last item is responsible for the bitterness that has remained to the people of Patras as a reflection of the specific period. The overall approach to Patras 2006 have been characterized as having no realistic vision and largely as having been related more to personal interests rather than the common good. The lost chance is therefore not only a matter of urban and cultural regeneration that simply did not take place but most importantly a negative experience for the city and an impediment in the challenge for similar smaller or bigger events in the future.*

**Key words:** *Cultural Capital, urban regeneration, cultural development, public participation*

January 2018



## 1. Introduction – methodological issues

The present paper focuses on the Greek city of Patras, the third largest city in the country with a population of over 250,000 inhabitants. During the last years the city of Patras, underwent the experience of hosting part of the 2004 Olympic Games and of being the European Cultural Capital of 2006. Throughout a period of almost a decade before, there has been a vivid discussion on the manner in which the local community would benefit from the organization of these two major events. The emphasis at the local level was placed at that time on the construction of athletic complexes, cultural centers and infrastructure networks (proceedings of the City Council of Patras the period between 2002-2003).

Yet, as time passed and festivities ended, it has become obvious that the legacy of the two big events, let alone the alleged interest in the city's future, is minimal. Furthermore it is interesting to note that there has been no official assessment regarding the reasons of the failure to exploit these opportunities for the city's development. In view of the above, this paper reviews the approach adopted by responsible politicians, public administration and stakeholders and examines their role in the procedure of policymaking on the issue. The main question is to what extent did Patras manage to benefit from the nomination and in case the answer is negative or even minimal, what were the reasons for this lost opportunity.

The methodological concerns regarding the issue are firstly based on the literature on the manner in which events like hosting Olympic Games but especially the European City/Capital of Culture contribute to urban regeneration. Secondly it is important to assess the approach adopted by policymakers and other interest groups who have been involved in both the planning and the implementation phase of the programme.

In order to achieve this it has been essential to carry out two surveys, aiming at the views of both the experts and the local community. Based on an open questionnaire and the Delphi method, the first survey comprised the collection of the views of a number of selected operational experts<sup>1</sup> on the procedure, the context and the element of participation of the various bodies involved in the Patras 2006 programme. In this procedure, the emphasis was placed on the execution as well as the evaluation of the Event seen as a whole.

In parallel to the above, the second survey involved narratives of 150 members of the local community concerning their view of the issue and especially the success of Patras 2006. Both surveys were conducted in March and April 2008.

---

<sup>1</sup> With the participation of the Deputy Mayors responsible for Patras 2006 in 2002 and 2004, the president of the Technical Chamber of Western Greece 2006 and the Director of the Patras cultural magazine "to donti".

## 2. The Institution of European City/Capital of Culture and its impact on urban and cultural regeneration

The institution of European Capital of Culture was conceived as a means of bringing citizens of the European Union closer together and was launched by the Council of Ministers on the initiative of the Greek Minister of Culture Melina Mercouri in 1985. Since then, the initiative has been more and more successful amongst European citizens and has had a growing cultural and socio-economic impact on the numerous visitors it has attracted.

Until 1999, the European Capital of Culture was financed through the "Culture 2000" programme. That year, the European Parliament and Council Decision of 1418/1999/EC integrated this event into the Community framework and introduced a new selection procedure for the Capitals for the 2005–2019 period. This was done to avoid overly fierce competition to win the accolade; each EU member nation will be given the opportunity to "host" the capital in turn. In the light of EU enlargement, two capitals will be selected each year from 2007 until 2019.

<i>EUROPEAN CITIES / CAPITALS OF CULTURE</i>		
1985: Athens	1986: Florence	1987: Amsterdam
1988: Berlin	1989: Paris	1990: Glasgow
1991: Dublin	1992: Madrid	1993: Antwerpen
1994: Lisbon	1995: Luxemburg	1996: Copenhagen
1997: Thessaloniki	1998: Stockholm	1999: Weimar
2000: Avignon, Bergen, Bologna, Brussels, Helsinki, Krakow, Rejkiavik, Prague, Santiago de Compostella		
2001: Porto + Rotterdam		2002: Brugge + Salamanca
2003: Graz		2004: Genova + Lille
2005: Cork		2006: Patras
2007: Luxemburg + Sibiu		2008: Liverpool + Stavanger
2009: Linz + Vilnius		2010: Essen + Pecs
<i>COUNTRIES FROM WHICH THE FUTURE CITIES / CAPITALS OF CULTURE WILL BE SELECTED</i>		
2011: Finland + Estonia		2012: Portugal + Slovenia
2013: France + Slovakia		2014: Sweden + Latvia
2015: Belgium + Czech Republic		2016: Spain + Poland
2017: Denmark + Cyprus		2018: Holland + Malta
2019: Italy		

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European\\_Capital\\_of\\_Culture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Capital_of_Culture)

It is important to note that contemporary urban development policies in Europe and the US often involve the development of cultural infrastructure as the means to boost their

image for place marketing and to ameliorate their attractiveness as places for investment in housing and tourism (Hutton 2004, Gospodini 2006). Hosting important cultural and athletic events may often be directly operational to that end (Myerscough 1994, Mommas 2004, Scott 2000).

The effect of the organization of important cultural events on urban renewal has not been commented adequately in planning literature<sup>2</sup>. Apparently the nature of a complex cultural event such as the European City/Capital of Culture, places the emphasis primarily on the organization of cultural happenings rather than on interventions with specific physical output. Thus although the organization of cultural events is linked to urban renewal, their success tends generally to depend on attracting visitors, improving entrepreneurialism, improving the social and cultural urban milieu as well as promotion and marketing and last but not least public participation (Lever 1999).

The impact of this type of culture-led regeneration goes beyond purely economic and physical consequences as it relates to the manner in which people view and value their city and its qualities. Employing soft indicators such as media and personal discourses, research conducted by Beatriz Garcia assesses the cultural impacts of Glasgow 1990 and arrives at the conclusion that the effect of the city's regeneration on local images and identities is the strongest and best-sustained legacy of Glasgow's reign as City of Culture 15 years on (Garcia, 2005).

During the 22 years of consecutive nominations, the institution of the European City/Capital of Europe has varied significantly in terms of its success. Benefits achieved may not only be physical and economic but also social and cultural in character. The most interesting paradigm is that of Glasgow 1990 in which the target of developing the city as an important centre of international tourism set by the organizers has been met. In order to achieve the target set, Glasgow worked for merely a decade, more than any other Cultural Capital of Europe, and the result was tremendous. The total benefit reached 14.3 million sterling, more than 5,500 new work places have been created while there has also been an increase of 40% in theatre tickets, 50% in tourism and 50% in the number of conferences held in the city (Garcia, 2005).

The economic and social accomplishment of Glasgow 1990 has boosted the interest of other candidates to be nominated and to benefit the advantages offered. Yet, even though Graz 2003 has been considered as having managed to link culture with everyday life very competently and Cork 2005 to organize as many as 4000 venues with the small budget of 15 million Euros, it appears that Glasgow's success still remains unsurpassed. It is due to this success that the interest to be nominated has been so

---

<sup>2</sup> In as much as the Greek experience is concerned, the urban interventions that had been implemented in the case of Thessaloniki 1997 did not take place in Patras 2006 (Chastaoglou V. 2006).

strong that as early as 2003, 12 cities with the United Kingdom competed for the 2008 nomination in a manner similar to a national competition<sup>3</sup>.

### **3. Patras as the European City/Capital of Culture 2006**

The prospect of Patras becoming an applicant for the specific institution was firstly brought up by the Greek Minister of Culture of the reigning socialist party in 1998. It is very interesting to note that just a year before, the European City/Capital for the year 1997 had been Thessaloniki, the country's second largest city, the overall experience being upsetting if not depressing mainly due to the rumor about the improper management of economic assets it involved. Apparently, the reasons behind the Minister's proposal in favor of Patras<sup>4</sup> were chiefly political in nature as the aim was, on the one hand to alleviate the criticism of the Thessaloniki 1997 adverse experience and on the other hand, to increase the party's political influence on local elections in Southwestern Greece by supporting its largest city, Patras.

It must further be noted that, according to the European schedule, the year 2006 had been designated for a City/Capital of the Netherlands. As Greece had already the opportunity of hosting the institution for two occasions, Athens 1985 and Thessaloniki 1997, the country's turn was scheduled for 2018. Still Greek officials managed to achieve a mutual swap with the Netherlands in favor of Patras.

Greece applied for the city of Patras in June 2001 and the application<sup>5</sup> was being presented to the Committee in December 2001. In evaluating the proposal, the European Evaluation Committee<sup>6</sup> faced a serious dilemma as Patras had been the only alternative as an applicant and enjoyed the full support of the member state that was responsible for the application. In such cases, the Committee realizes that its role may not be influential as it is aware of the possible drawbacks regarding the institution if the recommendations are not implemented. The proposal's plans had been assessed as not meeting the criteria set by decision 1418/199/EC of the European Parliament and Council and not being eligible to be accepted as a 'cultural plan of European dimensions'. Furthermore the plans had had significant deficiencies as it appeared difficult for the city's urban cultural infrastructure to manage to host the events.

Thus, in order to be eligible to be nominated as the European City/Capital of Europe, the city of Patras had been required:

---

<sup>3</sup> Six cities, Bristol, Birmingham, Cardiff, Newcastle, Oxford and Liverpool reached the final and had to prepare a full dossier each. Finally, Liverpool was chosen to take the seat allocated to Great Britain for 2008. The organizers anticipate that the total monetary outcome of the nomination will be 200 million sterling, while more than 14000 new work places will be created.

<sup>4</sup> Newspaper 'to Vima', 23 Oct 2005 , p.: A24, code: B14598A241, ID: 273230

<sup>5</sup> The fee for the preparation of the dossier had been 440,000 Euros

<sup>6</sup> Evaluation Committee report, Sep. 2002

- to employ a team of managers who will have to be capable of developing a comprehensive cultural program while also having the experience of organizing international cultural events at a European level,
- to opt for the implementation of a realistic amount of important cultural events of international standards,
- to ensure that the cultural programs will be of purely European range,
- to develop a strategic plan on which the creative and managerial actors will be based in order to implement and sustain the cultural events and programs for the year 2006.

Under the above conditions Patras was nominated as the European City/Capital of Culture for the year 2006 in May 2003 with the decision 399/2003/EK of the EU Council.

### **3.1. The interventions and activities planned for Patras 2006**

The preparation phase for Patras 2006, must viewed not only as such but also in relation to changes in the local and national political context. As the Patras 2006 proposal matures from conception to implementation, ideas and activity preceding the inauguration of the event develop with time. Thus, at first the debate among policymakers, stakeholders and other interest groups had been vibrant and often dramatic participants agreed on the significance of the Patras 2006 nomination, along with the Athens 2004 Olympics, for the regeneration of Patras.

The main interventions related to urban infrastructure were based on the 2001 proposal which, among others, allocated areas of cultural interest in the urban fabric. These interventions comprised:

- the construction of an open air theatre with a capacity of 3000 in Northeastern Patras,
- the construction of an auditorium with a capacity of 900 in the obsolete former industrial quarter along the city's coastal zone,
- the foundation of a picture gallery,
- the revitalization of the protected zone of Agia through its transformation in a recreation area and
- the renovation of eight historical building complexes<sup>7</sup> and their subsequent use as showrooms.

---

<sup>7</sup> Municipal Hospital, municipal shelter for the poor, the Argyris Market, the Barry warehouses, Maragopoulion, the Kolla warehouses, municipal baths and the ASO warehouses

With reference to the cultural program, the plan included 330 cultural events divided into 40 programs and 15 units of activities some of which, like the Cultural Children Festival, the Patras orchestra with Balkanian musicians, were based on cultural exchange between European artists and anticipated to take place on a yearly basis.

The budget for the cultural program for the year 2006 had been estimated to reach 56 million €, while another 80 million € had been the estimated infrastructure costs and 4 million € for promotion and marketing. The above costs had been anticipated to be covered mainly by the Greek Ministry of Culture as well as donations of the private sector since the European Union had stopped subsidizing the function a few years earlier.

The results expected from the candidacy and the award after 2006 could be summed up as follows (Candidacy Proposal 2001):

1. Positive effects on the labor market from an increase in the culture market through the employment in the fields of recreation and cultural management,
2. Effects from the exchange of cultural know-how,
3. Survival and development of small artist groups from the local community, who are anticipated to have a broader public,
4. As an indirect and important effect is the employment of the city's infrastructures, which brings a general feeling of progress and development. The residents do not feel neglected and this raises the economic indices to a marked degree, also bearing strong boosting to the quality of life.

As the City of Patras became the award (over the decision of the Evaluation Committee Sep. 2002)<sup>8</sup>, the local council that followed the 2002 local elections arrives at a decision about specific urban interventions in spring 2003. Eighteen projects are selected and are planned to be subsidized by the Ministry of Finance in November 2003. At that time the organizers realize that they may easily fail to keep up with their schedule. In order to ensure that timetables are kept, the Municipality employs a technical consultant who starts working even before the agreement is signed. Yet, as procedures related to public works are particularly tedious in Greece, the criticism that derived from the surveys on experts revealed that a lot of valuable time could have been spared if the interventions were organized by the Achaia Development rather than the municipality itself.

In March 2004, national elections resolved in a government change. The new leadership of the Ministry of Culture decided to dismiss the technical consultant of Patras 2006. Following this intervention, the deputy mayor of Patras responsible for culture resigned.

Nearly a year later, in March 2005, the organization of Patras 2006 was undertaken by a newly formulated body called 'Patras Cultural Capital of Europe 2006 SA'. The only

---

<sup>8</sup> But it took 6 more months till the sign of this decision



member of the organization was the Greek state and more specifically the Ministry of Culture, its purpose being to plan, organize and monitor the cultural events. This was a body, fairly flexible in terms of the way public expenditure could be managed<sup>9</sup>, presided by a council of 15 members who consisted of representatives of local interest groups. An executive committee of five members was chaired by a political personality with little knowledge and experience on cultural issues.

The works that had been planned were both complex and immature in nature as most of them had not been designed even at the level of a preliminary study. In many cases even the sites on which new construction would take place hadn't been decided. In addition to the above, there was no consensus on the manner in which many of the interventions would be tendered. The lack of agreement also related to the way in which the works would be subsidized. As a result it was not certain whether the works would be required to attract private capital or public financing. This divergence in approach relates directly to the different modes of urban cultural development in which the first approach follows to some extent the model of the entrepreneurial city while the second is more likely to support the notion of the Creative one (Harvey, 1989; Loukaitou-Sideri, 2006).

In the end, only two out of eighteen major interventions had been completed by the time of the inauguration of the Patras 2006 events<sup>10</sup>. Apart from this, it must be noted that the auditorium had been constructed without a legal permit as a purely prefabricated semi-permanent structure. Still, there was no criticism from the Technical Chamber as it had been evident that time was short for anything else.

Finally and in relation to the cultural program, in the end 370 events were implemented although the actual schedule as a whole had not been prepared by January 2006. Nevertheless certain ideas about innovative events like the Cultural Children Festival and the Patras orchestra with musicians from the Balkans did not finally take place.

### **3.2. Public participation**

Until the end of 2002, public participation in the form of interventions in local councils and the media had been minimal. As the Patras 2006 event approached, the interest has been somehow increased especially in as much as expressing of views in the local media is concerned.

It may be argued that although the discussion among people who were involved in the issue had been vivid, the majority of interest groups have not been prepared to undertake specific initiatives in favor of the Patras 2006 event. Engineers for example, who may be considered as a most relevant interest group, could only present a coherent

---

<sup>9</sup> There has been a lot of criticism about unlawful employment of staff based on political criteria

<sup>10</sup> Due to the delay in the implementation of the necessary infrastructure, the official inauguration date had to be postponed by nine days

proposal for interventions as late as the end of 2005. Thus the proposal of the Technical Chamber of Patras<sup>11</sup> was more romantic than realistic as it involved projects which lacked the time to be properly studied and get the needed building permits.

The main question is “Why and to what should stakeholders, associations or single citizens participate?» (Heinelt/Getimis 2004 ). In this case Patras 2006 did not succeed to set up or listen to motivation of the local community for this Event, driven from beliefs, visions or interests.

With reference to the cultural program, Patras 2006 comprised venues that did not relate to the creative dimension of the local community. As it appears the program had been formulated in such a manner that it did not allow the local community to participate and express itself as it did in earlier Cultural Cities/Capitals and especially Glasgow 1990 where the events began from or managed to reach the most deprived urban neighborhoods (Garcia , 2005). As a result, local artists felt excluded and complained and the cultural director of Patras 2006 himself resigned in the beginning of 2006.

As regards the majority of the local community, their participation had been negligible. The lack of interest was manifested in minimal participation in the venues planned. In addition to this lack of interest it is interesting to note that there has been a 7% drop in hotel occupancy in Patras since 2005.

The field survey of a random sample of 150 citizens of the local community<sup>12</sup> examined the answers on three basic questions:

- the number of Patras 2006 venues they had participated
- whether they considered the Patras 2006 event, seen as a whole, successful and for what reason, and
- what they thought was the most significant drawback in the implementation of the Patras 2006 program, choosing one out of poor organization, lack of finance, poor promotion and repeated resignations

One fourth of the people questioned replied that they hadn't participated in any event, two thirds had been to less than 5 while only 7% had participated to more than 5 events. It is interesting to note that most people had difficulties in recollecting the extent of their behavior at the time although only two years have passed.

In relation to Patras 2006 success, 83% considered the whole event to be a failure as there had been a lot of discussion for no actual outcome. On top of that, most people thought that most venues could have been incorporated in the cultural festival which is already organized by the city of Patras on a yearly basis.

---

<sup>11</sup> The proposal related to the exploitation and development of public space and obsolete private land for cultural uses.

<sup>12</sup> 174 people participated in the survey, 13 out of which refused to answer while another 11 knew nothing about Patras 2006

In relation to the reason for the failure, almost everybody was aware of the successive resignations yet only 8% thought of this as being the main explanation. Almost 67% of the people questioned viewed poor organization as being responsible and only a quarter thought that it had been a matter of shortages in funding which is normally presented as the most significant cause in similar surveys.

Still one should note the surprisingly high number of volunteers who participated in the Patras 2006 event. Although the procedure for applications for volunteers had only opened 3 months prior to January 2006, as many as 1700 people expressed their interest to participate, probably following the successful paradigm of the 2004 Olympics. What in case of Patras 2006 in contrast with other European cities is missing, is the failure and negligence of the city to exploit this human potential and interest for its future.

### **3.3. The evaluation of Patras 2006**

The scrutiny of the characteristics of the situation in which Patras 2006 has been conceived, nominated, planned and implemented has shown that there have been both objective and subjective reasons for the project's malfunction. Thus it has been evident that on the one hand the grounds on which the Event was supposed to be put up were precarious, while on the other hand, the whole undertaking was carried out in a manner that was far from being assessed as proficient.

From the very start, it has been clear for everybody that the Patras application for the European City/Capital of Culture was strongly political in nature and it was supposed to contribute to the boosting of the image of the Greek socialist party in view of the local elections of 2002. The local community achieved very little understanding of the significance of the institution. The fact that the Event was finally undertaken by the city of Patras mostly relied on strong political influence combined with the lack of opposition.

On top of that, the period of setting up the whole project has been characterized by successive changes in both local and central government. As these changes entailed shifts in political orientation and hence involved consecutive changes in people and policies, it would have been particularly difficult not to affect whatever stability already existed among the organizers. Changing people in key positions of the organization of Patras 2006 had been a recurrent phenomenon that not only had an effect on the continuity of Patras 2006 but also amplified people's skepticism about its success. Thus a major blow to the institution has been the case of the resignation of prominent personalities such as the Deputy Mayor responsible for Patras 2006 and the Director of the Cultural Program due to confrontation with hidden political insinuation.

It must further be noted that local governments in Greece are not particularly equipped to face complex tasks in their own right. The most significant impediment is the

everlasting shortage of funding, while it may be argued that the dependence on political influence at national level may prove equally disturbing. In the case of Patras, it has been evident that the municipality wanted the Ministry of Culture to be involved so that in the end they both shared the feared economic loss from the Event's failure.

The organization of Patras 2006 had to be set up in a context characterized by minimal political consensus and very little affinity for concrete support from the local community. Furthermore, it has been apt to be influenced by political clientelism both at the level of its conception as well as in the way it is asked to operate as even the body organizing the event ended up being inflated to as many as 60 employees. It is interesting to note that the initial organizers, who eventually underwent replacement due to political reasons, had attempted to learn from the experience of Helsinki and Reykjavik 2000, Thessaloniki 1997, Glasgow 1990 and other similar cities, understood that it is better to employ smaller and more efficient structures rather than larger ones.

Most importantly, a major setback regarding the organization of Patras 2006 is that, although the city of Patras and other policymakers had been discussing the issue for nearly a decade since the event actually commenced, there had been very little practical preparation. Thus, the phenomenon of not keeping timetables, which has been apparent in other similar and often more complicated events in Greece such as the 2004 Olympics, has also been more than evident in the case of Patras 2006.

Most of the works that had been planned had not even been adequately studied even several months before the inauguration date. In addition to that, the cultural program itself had to be formulated rather hastily and in such a manner that it had been impossible for it to encompass the majority of the creative cultural dimensions of the local community.

It must further be noted that, Patras failed to benefit from the positive effects of cultural know how exchange as the qualified staff chosen to contribute did not finally cooperate for the time needed to transmit their experience. In a similar manner, the Organization employed no middle qualified staff who would have been able to facilitate this transmission.

In local level, the Event's promotion failed to make Patras 2006 known not only across Europe but even within Greece. The budget allocated for promotion did not exceed 5% of the total whereas promotion expenditure had reached 20% in cases of other European Cities/ Capitals of Culture. The fact that Patras 2006 almost coincided with the organization of the 2004 Olympics had an adverse effect on society's awareness of the Event as the Olympics attracted the attention almost exclusively.

Although the contribution of the city of Patras in the organization of the 2004 Olympics had been rather confined to hosting a part of the football preliminaries, the city managed to construct a larger part of infrastructure networks and achieve a stronger image glow than the outcome of the European City/Capital of Culture. The reason for this was that

the Olympics had been a purely central government issue and all works had been designed and monitored at a national level.

Nevertheless, as the Coordinator of the Patras 2006 Organization Committee maintained, 'the Organization was established as late as March 2005 and the delay in planning the project was mostly due to political reasons as well as the 2004 Olympics, an event had been considered as being of primary national importance which did not allow other events of similar nature to be organized satisfactorily'<sup>13</sup>.

## 4. Conclusions

To conclude, experience has shown that it is possible for cities to develop a stance that encompasses culture with city marketing whether at national or international scale. The organization of important events such as the Olympics or the European City/Capital of Culture has in certain occasions proven to operate as levers to that kind of urban and even cultural regeneration.

Patras has failed to benefit from the opportunity given by both the organization of the European City/Capital of Culture 2006 and the 2004 Olympics for a complex set of reasons. The examination of the situation leads to the conclusion that even the modest output of infrastructure invested in Patras due to the Olympics did not prove to be sufficient to serve as the starting point for the urban and cultural regeneration anticipated after the Patras 2006 Event.

Patras has failed not only in as much as it did not succeed to meet the quantitative targets but above all in relation to its qualitative ones. Yet this distinction is not enough to explain the matter. In the case of Patras the poor preparation and organization, the successive variation of people in responsible posts and especially the failure to actively involve the local community in the alleged cultural regeneration of the city. The last item is responsible for the bitterness that has remained as a reflection of the specific period. As an influential member of the network of Cultural Capitals who has been interviewed pointed out, Patras 2006 has been characterized as having no realistic vision and is logically now considered as having been related more to personal interests rather than the common good.

The lost chance is therefore not only a matter of urban and cultural regeneration that simply did not take place but most importantly a negative experience for the city and an impediment in the challenge for similar smaller or bigger events in the future.

---

<sup>13</sup> General Assembly of the network of Cultural Capitals of Europe, Cork, Ireland, Nov. 2005 [www.roilos.gr](http://www.roilos.gr)

## Bibliography

- CHASTAOGLOU V. (2006): Historical Places and Future Images of the city. Regenerating Thessaloniki as Cultural Capital of Europe 1997. in GOSPODINI A. and BERIATOS E.: *New urban Landscapes and the Greek city*. KRITIKI, Athens, 190-201
- GARCIA (2005) Deconstructing the city of Culture: The long-term Cultural Legacies of Glasgow 1990, in *Urban Studies*, Vol. 42, No 5-6
- GOSPODINI A. and BERIATOS E. (2005): Glocalising Urban Landscapes – Athens and the 2004 Olympics, *Cities* 21(3): 187-202
- HALL T. and HUBBART P. (eds.) (1998): *The Entrepreneurial City: Geographies of Politics, Regime and Representation*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- HARVEY D. (1989), From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: The Transformation of Urban Governance in Late Capitalism, *Geografiska Annaler*, 71B: 3-17.
- HEINELT H. & GETIMIS P. (2004): Leadership and Community involvement in European Cities. Conditions of Success and/or Failure, Paper for the International Conference *City Future*, held in Chicago 8-10 July 2004.
- LEACH S. & WILSON D. (2000): *Local Political Leadership*, Bristol, Policy Press
- LEVER W. (1999): Competitive Cities in Europe, *Urban Studies*, vol. 36 (5-6), 1029-1044
- LOUKAITOU – SIDERI A. (2006): Cultural Landscapes and strategies. The American experience in GOSPODINI A. and BERIATOS E.: *New urban Landscapes and the Greek city*. KRITIKI, Athens, 52-68
- MOMMAAS H.(2004), Cultural Clusters and the Post industrial City: Towards the Remapping of Urban Cultural Policy, *Urban Studies* 41, 3: 507-532
- MYERSCOUGH J. (1994): European Cities of Culture and Cultural Months, *Network of Cultural Cities of Europe*
- SCOTT A. (2000): *The Cultural Economy of Cities*, London, Sage Publications
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European\\_Capital\\_of\\_Culture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Capital_of_Culture)