

## RECREATIONAL – TOURISM ACTIVITIES IN MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR WORLD HERITAGE SITES. THE CASE OF ARANJUEZ (SPAIN), CULTURAL HERITAGE LANDSCAPE

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The Cities and Cultural Landscapes included in the List of World Heritage supported by UNESCO are defined as complex realities in which old and new functions exist in tension with notable risk to their conservation. In this sense, beyond statements of principles of general nature, the UNESCO Centre for World Heritage encourages the preparation of specific management plans for each of the Sites included on the List. The obligation to develop these does not stem from the 1972 Convention for the Protection of World Heritage, but from Practical Guidelines for their Application, technical documents that have been written since the 1970s. The first references to these plans are found in the 1994 Guidelines, although the crucial step is found in the document for Guidelines of 2005.

In spite of the diversity of national focuses and concrete experiences in the development of management plans, what is notable is the coincidence of attention given to tourism. The protagonism of tourist influx must be noted in the recent dynamics of many of these sites, having varied effects on different levels (social, morphological, landscape, etc.) Tourism can serve to reinforce the multifunctionality of many sites, but one must also assume that it can generate risks for conservation. The number of Sites that have to be reviewed by the World Heritage Committee because of threat to universal value due to inadequate tourism practices is rapidly growing; this is due, to a great extent, to the lack of integral systems of planning and management that are included in the dimension of tourism. The implications that tourism has for conservation, and also for local development, are seen reflected in the methodological guidelines developed on the national level to orient the design of management plans, promoted by organisms such as *Ministerio per I Beni e le Attivita Culturali* de Italia, (the Ministry for Welfare and Cultural Activity in Italy (2004), the German Commission of UNESCO (2008) and SEDESOL of Mexico (2010). As well

as these general guidelines, concern for tourism is a recurring theme in a good part of the plans developed in various historical cities and cultural landscapes. For example, in the Piano di Gestione Centro Storico (Management Plan for Historical Centre of Florence) (2006) concern is mentioned for the concentration of visitor flow in the «golden triangle» and the increase in short stay tourism that is degrading the city. On the other hand, in the Plano de Gestao Centro Historico de Oporto (Management Plan for the Historical Centre of Oporto) (2010), the increase in the number of visitors is considered to be an opportunity, a differentiating element and a support for the regional tourism offer. To a great extent, the diversity of points of view implies very different handling of tourism.

In Spain very little has been done on the development of plans requested by UNESCO. Among others, three cases stand out: The Management Plan for the Alhambra and the Generalife 2007-2015 (a work of Patronage with capacity for full intervention on its World Heritage category); the set of plans for World Heritage cities of Castilla y León (Avila, Salamanca and Segovia) promoted by regional government and with marked problems of adjustment to suggestions that local authorities defend; as well as the Management Plan for Cultural Landscape of Aranjuez, whose Outline, basically a document of analysis and diagnosis, was presented in 2010. One of the large sections of the Outline for the Plan is dedicated to leisure and tourism, a theme appointed and developed by the authors of the article. In the first place is noted the unique heritage of Aranjuez for which it derives its tourist attraction: the location of the Royal Estate with a good part of its heritage references corresponding to its use by the Crown and its management by National Heritage; a property transformed by gardeners, landscapers and «agriculturalists» of the Court who created a humanized landscape of great historical, aesthetic, and cultural value; as well as an urban setting based on a design by Bonavia from 1750 in which square blocks are overlapped by great rows that fan out from the Royal Palace.

In the second place guidelines are introduced for territorial introduction of the tourism-recreational function within the category declared Cultural Heritage, in which three extensive areas can be defined:

- «Area of intensive tourist use,» which is defined as the nucleus of the monument of the Royal Palace, the immediate surroundings of the Royal Palace and its adjacent squares and gardens. It includes the principal monumental landmarks, the urban spaces and spots of greatest tourist interest, such as hotels, restaurants, shops and activities for tourists. Therefore, it is defined as the nucleus of the heritage and tourism area of the municipality, with notable problems of traffic congestion at peak hours and a proliferation of establishments which occupy the public road.
- «Area of mixed tourist-recreational use,» which includes the less monumental section of the baroque part of the city, el *Raso de la Estrella* and a good part of the historical gardens. In spite of the efforts made in the last years in terms of environment, urban improvements and heritage recuperation, it is not easy to spread the tourist activity out and it remains firm in these places causing problems of movement and organization.
- «Area of extensive tourist-recreational use,» which corresponds to the greater part of the gardens, groves and tree-lined lanes. Areas with a strong agrarian use that have also always been used for strolling and local leisure (fishing, restaurants and

horseback riding, etc). Recent dynamics show that as agrarian activities diminish, other alternatives have been found in the area of gaming and sports.

And finally, we include the points of the present tourist profile of Aranjuez, one of the oldest and most important destinations in the Community of Madrid. Like other historic centres in the Madrid surroundings (Toledo, Segovia...), the city has based its success on two factors: the strength of monumental heritage in its most classic of version (Palace-Gardens) and its proximity to greater Madrid, a great source and generator of visitors. However, this tourist pattern shows signs of exhaustion in a situation where old and new problems meet (predominance of day trippers, the mature image and in a certain sense a lack of new attractions, etc). And all this occurs in a growingly competitive context, with traditional destinations in process of total renewal, emerging destinations within the regional tourist panorama and large leisure facilities with very aggressive business strategies. In any case, tourist initiatives are appearing that show the first signs of diversification in its still early stage.

According to the UNESCO formula, management plans should have an integral character and a basically co-ordinating orientation. This option permits advance in the conservation of multi-use in many cities and cultural landscapes, guaranteeing therefore their authenticity as living heritage spaces. In this sense, one can include tourism policy as one of the basic programs of the plan, adapting said policy to the central goal of the plan, which should be no other than to guarantee the Universal Value of the property. Faced with the introduction of integral and co-ordinated intervention in the Spanish experience, the physical component of the intervention rules excessively, based on the pre-eminence that urban planning has had among us and still continues to have. The Management Plan for the Cultural Landscape of Aranjuez reflects the greater part of these virtues as well as the defects; the Outline has a marked urbanistic character in line with the special plans for protection making difficult the integration of tourism policy in an instrument that by its very nature should act as a general reference for intervention in World Heritage Landscape.

