

The Organization and the Social Procedures of a Trade Fair. The Example of Amyntaio, Florina, Greece (1956-2012)

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Doi:10.5901/mjss.2013.v4n2p45

Abstract

Built-up areas are structural units developed through a specific process, which has frequently got a social character. At times, the construction of such areas is attributed to factors which are not purely social: such factors are geographical location, the geophysical morphology of the wider area, relevant administrative or political laws etc. Overall, major cities and towns are constructed under the influence of a number of factors, cultural, historical, administrative, geographical, social, etc. The considerations discussed above are ensued by a shared attitude towards space, according to the following principles: a) Spatial allotment of human activities, which reflects the organized accommodation in considerations of distance, b) Decisions concerning land planning, which are taken in order to minimize the effects of distance, c) The locations in space, which are accompanied by accessibility standards, despite the fact that access to specific places is easier, d) The tendency to accumulate economic activities in space so that economy scales can be favoured, e) Human activities, which naturally tend to be ranked. The present paper aims at discussing aspects of the trade fair in the town of Amyntaio. The first organized residential nucleus of Amyntaio was established in the mid 18th century when families from the mountainous nearby areas came to the fertile plain near the lakes. In the specific centre of trade, the Greek commercial spirit was greatly enhanced. Greek tradesmen contributed to developing the new character of the town and promoting progress and culture. The trade fair in Amyntaio is closely associated with the weekly street market organized throughout the year, of which it is the highlight event. The research was primarily based on the archives of the Municipality of Amyntaio and the material of the research is comprised of the proceedings of the Town Council and the land survey maps accompanying the decisions made. The methodological issues associated with the measures of viability and vitality involve the assessment of service quality, the basic indicators of which range from satisfying customers to the profits accumulated by the Municipality during the specific time. The investigation of indicators is focused on Amyntaio, a town - centre, on account of the fact that it is vital and has a larger population and a more vigorous trade than the neighbouring towns. In general terms, the trade fair in Amyntaio, according to the basic indicators, is an institution that has not declined, but, in contrast, has been enhanced and contributed to town vitality and viability. Nowadays, it is worth pointing out that the transfer of the fair from the traditional market centre of the town to residential areas and areas with public and transportation services has contributed to the town vitality and viability which are indicators that the institution at issue thrives.

Keywords: financial factors, trade fair, locality

1. Introduction

Built-up areas are structural units developed through a specific process, which has frequently got a social character. At times, the construction of such areas is attributed to factors which are not purely social: such factors are geographical location, the geophysical morphology of the wider area, relevant administrative or political laws etc. Overall, major cities and towns are constructed under the influence of a number of factors, cultural, historical, administrative, geographical, social, etc.

A key factor that shapes the picture and potential of major cities is the process of settlement of new populations, which involves the following stages:

- The first settlement originally brings about economic and social problems related to territorial expansion, even in cases when the residential setting has already been organized (Burgess 1970). In addition, in terms of social organization, family and corporate relationships between the newcomers are strengthened and social cohesion appears to be very strong.
- In the period of accommodation, the nature of social and production relations is reshaped and the parts of the population that have already experienced the first settlement period are more dynamically involved (Castels 1972). The form of residential patterns is probably differentiated in comparison with older forms.
- City, as a concept, has been associated not only with various forms of class in equal distance from other peripheral places.
- Business centre, which involves not only land purchase but also business and consumer activities taking place in an area.
- Residential and population density, according to which the inner city or trade centre is perceived as the area with the greatest population density. Thus, the needs of a population group, which is considered as the majority, can be satisfied.

2. Theoretical considerations

The considerations discussed above are ensued by a shared attitude towards space, according to the following principles:

- Spatial allotment of human activities, which reflects the organized accommodation in considerations of distance
- Decisions concerning land planning, which are taken in order to minimize the effects of distance
- The locations in space, which are accompanied by accessibility standards, despite the fact that access to specific places is easier
- The tendency to accumulate economic activities in space so that economy scales can be favoured
- Human activities, which naturally tend to be ranked.

Urban and semi-urban centres have been not only the primary component of administrative and social organization of a country, but they are also considered as an attractive and fundamental concept. Thus, a centre is not simply a place of intensive economic activity, but also a place of vital social activity, which originates from a great number of human personal needs and is transformed into ensuing social needs. In effect, urban and semi-urban centres have been developing on the basis of human and social needs, offering solutions and benefits relative to the problems and needs of society. Thus, it is also worth noting that they should be organically associated with the human factor and human activities.

3. The trade fair in Amyntaio

The first organized residential nucleus of Amyntaio was established in the mid 18th century when families from the mountainous nearby areas came to the fertile plain near the lakes. Maintaining the rural character of the region, the inauguration of the new railway road of Thessaloniki – Monastiri (contemporary Bitola) was instrumental to the development of the small settlement which displayed urban characteristics. The railway road transformed the place into one of the greatest economic centres of West Macedonia: 'next to the station called Sorovitz, there is a small town with the same name, with a school and church. Near it, new buildings, stores and hotels were built, and a new residential quarter was structured, through which commercial transactions were carried out [...]. In the specific centre of trade, the

Greek commercial spirit was greatly enhanced. Greek tradesmen contributed to developing the new character of the town and promoting progress and culture (Hatzikyriakos χ.χ.).

Nowadays, Amyntaio (called Sorovitz until 1922) is the seat of the municipality with the same name as well as the administrative and trade centre of the wider area. It is the second larger Municipality in the county of Florina with a population of 8.378 people, according to the census data of 2001 (Municipality of Amyntaio 2005, 35). Of these, 4.407 live in Amyntaio and the rest in the wider area of the municipality¹.

The institution of trade fairs has been a crucial business and social event for the wider area of Amyntaio; in the past, it used to be probably the only means of entertainment. The trade fair is held in the town residential area every year during the first ten days of October, according to the Royal Decree in 1965 (R. D. 292/5-12-56). The time during which the trade fair is held coincides with the period when the people tend to have acquired purchasing power, after they have sold their produce, accomplished farm work and have to provide for winter commodities. In addition, such a trade fair has been very significant for the folklore culture of the specific area, since it is conceived as a pole of attraction and a reason for gathering the people living in the wider area.

4. Research objective, sampling and methodology

The present paper aims at discussing aspects of the trade fair in the town of Amyntaio. Based on the relevant Royal Decree, the research attempts to analyze the progress of the trade fair through the process of examining the location, the modifications and expansions of the land survey plan of the fair, and focus on the profits gained by the activities in the town centre. In detail, the objective of the study is to highlight the social, economic and cultural functions of the trade fair that contribute to the life of the specific town as well as of the wider area. The research was primarily based on the archives of the Municipality of Amyntaio and the material of the research is comprised of the proceedings of the Town Council and the land survey maps accompanying the decisions made. The assessment and examination of vitality and viability plans of the town is performed by means of employing the relevant indicators, which were derived from the Proceedings of the Town Council. The Proceedings reflect the economic and social structure of the community in Amyntaio as well as the perceptions on which the decision-making about the organization of the trade fair was based and which determined the nature of the trade fairs. The methodological issues associated with the measures of viability and vitality involve the assessment of service quality, the basic indicators of which range from satisfying customers to the profits accumulated by the Municipality during the specific time. There have been various attempts to combine such indicators with assessment methods, which usually comprise multi-factor analyses (Charnes, Cooper & Rhodes 1981, 668–696; Bitner, Booms & Tetreault 1990, 71–84; Bell, Gilbert & Lockwood 1997, 405–423; Johns, Howcroft & Drake 1997, 119–127) and are based on theories of economy (Green & Champion 1990, 1393–1408), according to which the core function of the analysis is the comparative assessment of receipts and returns as evidence of the adequacy or efficiency of the services offered.

To discuss the maintenance of viability and vitality in the town at issue, it is essential that we determine the relevant indicators for the town centre management, that is, the indicators according to which the managerial efficiency of the fair is examined (Hollins, Oc & Tiesdell 1997, 89–100; Doe 1996). Acknowledging the contribution of the indicators to the economic management of a trade centre, it is assumed that the measurement of vitality and viability, despite the fact that it could include a series of indicators (Urbed 1994), is comprised of only a limited number of significant indicators, whereas the rest of them merely describe the conditions set by the Town Council, the expansions involved, the number of retailers, the auctions taking place, leasing, etc.

Basic indicators of viability and vitality

1. Leasing space for the trade fair
2. Type of goods
3. Diversity of current usage
4. Accessibility
5. Safety
6. Cleanness - Hygiene

The determination and establishment of an indicator involves two distinct elements: the outline and the collection of data concerning the vitality and viability of each distinct sector, that is, for each zone in the trade fair. Thus, only the indicators that derive from specific data identified or referred to in the Proceedings are included. The indicators reflect the

¹ The seat of the Municipality of Amyntaio is Amyntaio and is comprised of the Municipal departments of: Ag. Panteleimonas, Kelli, Klidi, Xino Nero, Petres, Rodonas, Fanos and the settlements Sotiras and Analipsi.

potential for determining the particular characteristics of vitality and viability of the town during the specific period. They correspond to an empirical approach to vitality and viability of the specific places in the town and identify the economic trends prevailing in the town during the period under research. In terms of Green *et al.* (1990), the specific indicators forecast development trends rather slowly, but consistently: the current local economic progress tends to be related to the equivalent progress in the past and it is likely that it is crucial and also decisive for the economic progress in the future.

5. Data analysis

The trade fair in Amyntaio is closely associated with the weekly street market organized throughout the year, of which it is the highlight event. Evidence about the street market in Amyntaio has been available in the Proceedings of the Town Council since 1921 (Local Authorities Archive, 1921); however, there are no official documents stating the exact time it used to take place annually. The close relationship of the weekly street market and the trade fair is highlighted by the fact that both events take place in the same space, that is, in the town central square (Market Square). According to the Proceedings of the Town Council, the trade fair can be organized 'in the open air, in a public area in the Town central square' (Town Council Proceedings, 79/1953, 86).

In 1970, the trade fair expanded and was organized in three areas (Town Council Proceedings, 19286/1970), in the Market Square, the Square of 21st April and in the area where the cattle fair used to take place. Later, in 1974, it was organized in two areas, that is, in the Market Square, the Square of 21st April, as the cattle fair was no longer organized (Fig. 2).

From 1978 until 1989, the trade fair expanded to town streets, whereas until then it used to take place only in open spaces, that is, in squares. Apart from the D. Makri Square (former Square of 21st April), the fair also spread out to the side-roads of the Market Square (G. Modi), the Square of Saint Constantine and Helen, Sophocleous street and Gr. Nicolaidis street (Town Council Proceedings, 5742/1974) (Fig. 3).

Since 1990, the trade fair has expanded to the east of the Square of Saint Constantine and Helen and Alexander the Great Street (Town Proceedings, 92/1990) (Fig. 4). In 1995, it also expanded to N. Hatzikonstantinou Street (former Sophocleous street), that is, to the boundaries of the Railway Station (Town Proceedings, 138/1995) (Fig. 5).

In 2000, the trade fair included Tr. Hatz Street and 28th October Street (Town Proceedings, 109/2000), and was the largest area that the trade fair has ever taken up within the residential district.

Despite administrative decentralization and the conversion of the nearby communities into municipalities, the interest in the traditional town-centre, Amyntaio, as the heart of trade transactions (Oc & Tiesdell 1997a) and as a significant residential area (Beauregard 1986, 35–55; O'Connor & Wynne 1993) is still high. Although the town-centre has been the recipient of wider social impacts (Zukin 1989 & 1993), the focus on 'centralization' arises from the conventional commitment to the notion of condensed cities (Fulford 1995; DOE 1996).

In addition, the strategic role of the town authorities to control the management of the centre is reflected in what Chaney (1994) considers as a marketability component, which is accomplished by means of co-operation and joint action. The essential function of town/city management, according to Warnaby (1998, 17-18), affects the organization of space, applying to both private and public areas, and also to the various interests involved. This is particularly true when the participants' interests, which, as Chaney (1994, 167-168) holds, are perceived as a dichotomy between exploitation and forms of delegation, interpenetrate. The language of interpenetration is structured around the constructs of quality and activity in the centre of a town or city; it is, thus, essential that we examine the covert constituents of a vital city-centre and, subsequently, analyze them, by employing indicators of leasing, products, variety of functions, accessibility, as well as appropriateness in terms of safety and hygiene.

As Jacobs (1961) holds, thriving cities are those that can maintain the vitality of place, determining its different functions, at different times in order to attract customers. The concept of 'viability' involves the consistent potential of a city to attract investors. The specific concepts are closely associated, since vitality, which is the basic component in new investments, as well as the continuous expansion of the facilities generate a strong and lasting attraction for visitors. The specific relationship, according to Montgomery (1995, 101-109), is based on the amount of the transactions that take place in cities, as 'the concept of vitality in cities implies an increase in the potential of transactions'.

The investigation of indicators is focused on Amyntaio, a town - centre, on account of the fact that it is vital and has a larger population and a more vigorous trade than the neighbouring towns. Given that the traditional centre displays the advantages of the functional aggregation and primacy of the transportation network, the town- centre is enhanced as a political, economic, social, cultural and symbolic place (Oc & Tiesdell 1997b, 15; Beauregard 1986, 35–55), in contrast to

towns in the neighbouring area which are not favoured in terms of public life. The emphasis on the management of public profits (Warnaby, Alexander & Medway 1998, 15–31), is highlighted in the discussion held by the Town Council 'about changing the spaces in which the annual trade fair is currently organized'. In 1970, the Mayor 'emphasized the economic and social reasons for organizing the specific events in the Market Square, where all the other artistic and social events take place, especially during national anniversaries' (Town Council Proceedings, 19286/1970). The Town Council states that 'the place where it is currently organized ... is the most appropriate and will remain the same'. The specific discussion is brought to an end in 1974, when it was argued that 'organizing the annual trade fair in a different place at the edge of the town is not convenient due to weather conditions and the business interests involved, as profits will not be yielded by the native retailers, but by vendors from other areas'; as a result, there will be a 'gradual economic depression in the town, on account of the fact that, during the annual trade fair, commercial transactions take place and the fair is not a mere show of products, as it typically happens in other similar situations' (Town Council Proceedings, 5742/1974).

6. Structures built for the trade fair

According to the Town Council Proceedings, until 1953, the trade fair was organized in the open air, and in 1970 the mayor recommended 'constructing special metal stalls and canopies, which can be hired by the participating retailers' (Town Council Proceedings, 19286/1970). Even nowadays, in Amyntaio there is no permanent place for the fair, since it is organized in a residential area, that is, it stretches from the shopping centre to the streets nearby and in areas with buildings and stores. The Authorities are responsible for the materials and the construction of wooden stalls, the electrical fittings necessary for the specific stalls, the installation of chemical toilets, and the hygiene and security of the place.

Trade fair spaces were leased with an auction from 1957 to 2003 and a contract of lease was signed between the Municipal Authorities and the 'prospective holder' (Royal Decree, 19/1955; Town Council Proceedings, 270/1956). To clarify, the Municipal Authorities used to assign the management and leasing of the place to a private individual. The specific practice was seriously contradicted (Town Council Proceedings, 109/1987) by the recommendation that the trade fair area should be exclusively exploited by the Municipal Authorities. Since 2004, the Municipal Authorities have been assigned with the management and leasing of the place, as, according to the Town Council Proceedings, 'the number of retailers had increased and the cost per retailer was 50% more than in the previous years' (Town Council Proceedings, 154/2005). With regard to the leasing auction, the Town Council emphasizes the following issues:

- Designating zones – zone pricing
- Establishing committees assigned with the observance of regulations
- Carrying out auctions
- Leasing capacity
- Control – security – protection

The available space for the trade fair is fixed and is divided in zones, the arbitrary occupation of which is prohibited. Thus, peddlers have to pay fines for illegal occupation of space; in case they occupy a private space, they are fined with a public charge. In addition, in all zones, the occupied spaces that are located at corners and those that have access from two streets are charged with a rate increased by 25% (Town Council Proceedings, 154/2005).

There are special conditions for street vendors with stalls-on-wheels and for others 'carrying their products in hands' that have to pay a different charge (Town Council Proceedings, 109/2000). The same category involves blacksmiths and repairers (Town Council Proceedings, 75/1978).

There are 8 zones for the trade fair, which correspond to how the trade fair had expanded in time and to the relevant Town Council decisions taken about the exact places in which the trade fair takes place (Table 1).

PI. 2: Zones of the trade fair and their verbal description

Zones	Area	Description	1955	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005
Zone 1	Market Square (D. Modi)	The town central square where the weekly street market takes place since 1921. Parametrically is surrounded by commercial stores.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Zone 2	D. Makri Square	A place with bars and cafés.				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Zone 3	St. Constantine & Helen Square	The town center. Banks branches, commercial stores and the cathedral are sited.						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Zone 4	Hatzikonstantinou Street	Main street that crosses the city from East to West.						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Zone 5	Gr. Nikolaidis Street and Col. Papapetros	Street nearby the Market Square were the Town Hall and other municipal services are sited.						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Zone 6	Alexander the Great Street	Main street that crosses the city from East to West.								✓	✓	✓	✓
Zone 7	The extensions of Alexander the Great Hatzikonstantinou Street	Residential areas.									✓	✓	✓
Zone 8	Tr. Hatzi Street	Street nearby the central park and a public walk. This is the extension of Hatzikonstantinou Street.										✓	✓

7. Analysis of the basic indicators

Indicator 1: Leasing

The retailers who used public spaces had to pay a specific rental fee for the period of the trade fair. During the first twenty years of the fair, the rental fee that each retailer had to pay depended on the type of goods and was twice as much as what they had to pay for the weekly street market. In the '80s, the retailers used to lease 'public space' per square metre. The price per square metre depended on the specific place and fluctuated accordingly. In the '90s, the rental fee per square metre was the same for all places, but recently, trade space has been charged according to location.

With regard to the rental fees demonstrated below (Table 2), it can be maintained that, typically, the most expensive area is the Fun Fair area, that is, the D. Makris square. Therefore, it was leased by auction separately (Town Council Proceedings, 154/2005). In addition, the Square of Saint Constantine and Helen remains a significant fair point, as it is a place where manufactured goods are displayed and recreational events take place (with amusements, music, food). It is worth noting that, in terms of research significance, the 'game of fortune' is an amusement, which is particularly interesting for boys and girls, who buy 'pink and blue message papers' that signify love and family stereotypes and roles in the context of contemporary society (photo 1).

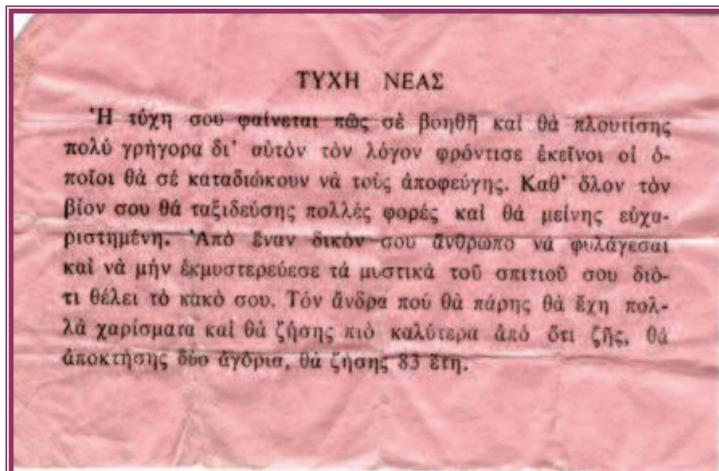


Photo 1. The game of fortune (Arc. E. Emmanouil)²

N. Hatzikonstantinou street (former Sophocleous street), where carpet-making items are displayed, is a place with high rental fees, because it is easily accessible. In addition, Gr. Nikolaidis street has conventionally had the lowest rental fee as it is the place where the vegetable and fruit street market takes place during the period of the trade fair. The area near Alexander the Great Street and Tr. Hatzis Street, which is the area where the fair has recently expanded, has the second higher rental fee after the Fun Fair zone, and it is considered a place with a high purchasing capacity. Finally, rental fees for the extension roads towards the Railway station are low due to the greater distance from the centre.

² Among the fair amusements, there was one with trained pigeons which picked up message notes predicting the future in money, love and family affairs.

Table 2. Comparative table of zone rental fees

Zones	Area	Rental Fees								
		1955	1965	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005
Zone 1	Market Square (D. Modi)	Twice as much as the weekly street market.	Twice as much as the weekly street market.	Twice as much as the weekly street market.	2	3	The same for all places	The same for all places	The same for all places	4
Zone 2	D. Makri Square			Twice as much as the weekly street market.	1	1	The same for all places	The same for all places	The same for all places	1
Zone 3	St. Constantine & Helen Square				2	4	The same for all places	The same for all places	The same for all places	2
Zone 4	Hatzikonstantinou Street				1	2	The same for all places	The same for all places	The same for all places	2
Zone 5	Gr. Nikolaidis Street and Col. Papapetros				3	4	The same for all places	The same for all places	The same for all places	4
Zone 6	Alexander the Great Street						The same for all places	The same for all places	The same for all places	2
Zone 7	The extensions of Alexander the Great Hatzikonstantinou Street s								The same for all places	3
Zone 8	Tr. Hatzi Street								The same for all places	2

Where 1 = the highest rental fee, 2 = the second in rank higher fee, 3 = the third in rank higher fee, 4 = the lowest rental fee.

Indicator 2: Types of goods

The types of goods purchased in the trade fair have been naturally different in time, signifying the transition from a basically rural society to a society consuming manufactured products. In the first decades of the trade fair, the goods in trade can be classified as demonstrated in Table 3.

PI. 3. Types of goods in the 1950s and the 1960s.

Types of goods		
Agricultural and plant products	Cereals	Wheat, rye, corn, barley, vetch
	Legumes	Beans, lentil, peas
	Vegetables & Plants	Dry Garlics
	Citrus fruits and fruits	Apples, Orange, Grapes, Melons, Potatoes
	Dry nuts	Almonds, walnuts, hazelnuts, peanuts, chestnuts
	Seeds	
	Spices	Red Pepper, Pepper
	Forages	Grass
	Alcohol	Ouzo, Raki
	Oils	Olive oil
Veterinary surgeon products	Greases	Grease, Soap
	Meats	Beef, pork
	Dairy products	Cheese, Butter
Fishes		Sardines, bonitos, trouts
Types of domestic use	Carpets	
	Tools & materials	
	Thermantic types	
	Lightning types, candles, oil lamps	
Food	Taverns, fast-foods	
Entertainment	Spectacles: theatres, acrobatics, lotary	
Types of domestic use		
Pharmaceutical types		
Haberdashery		

For the next years (1978 – 2005), there is not a detailed description of goods in the Town Council Proceedings, but only a general classification (i.e. haberdashery, manufactured goods etc.). Since the '80s, the classification has been fixed as follows:

PI. 5. Types of goods and products in the 1980s, the 1990s and the early 2000s.

1. Clothes, clothing
2. Footwear
3. Haberdashery
4. Food
5. Public entertainment
6. Manufactured articles
7. Rags and Carpets
8. Vegetables, fruits

It is worth noting that the sale zone for each type of product has not been considerably changed, but involves the same types of goods. In addition, retailers tend to lease the same place every year so that trade visitors can find them more easily.

Table 6. Goods per zone

Zones	Area	Time periods										
		1955	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005
Zone 1	Market Square (D. Modi)	All goods and products.	All goods and products.	Clothing footwear novelties, food.	Clothing, footwear, novelties, food.	Clothing, footwear, novelties, food, except rags and carpets.	Clothing, footwear, novelties, food, except rags and carpets.	Clothing, footwear, novelties, food, except rags and carpets.	Clothing, footwear, novelties, food, except rags and carpets.			
Zone 2	D. Makri Square				Luna Park, entertainment.	Luna Park, entertainment.	Luna Park, entertainment.	Luna Park, entertainment.	Luna Park, entertainment, taverns.			
Zone 3	St. Constantine & St. Helen Square						Manufactured articles.	Manufactured articles.	Manufactured articles.	Manufactured articles.	Manufactured articles.	Manufactured articles.
Zone 4	Chatzikonstantinou Street						Rags and carpets.	Rags and carpets.	Rags and carpets.	Rags and carpets.	Rags and carpets.	Rags and carpets.
Zone 5	Gr. Nikolaidis Street and Col. Papapetros						Fruits and vegetables.	Fruits and vegetables.	Fruits and vegetables.	Fruits and vegetables.	Fruits and vegetables.	Fruits and vegetables.
Zone 6	Alexander the Great Street								Clothing, footwear, novelties, food, except rags and carpets.	Clothing, footwear, novelties, food, except rags and carpets.	Clothing, footwear, novelties, food, except rags and carpets.	Clothing, footwear, novelties, food, except rags and carpets.
Zone 7	The extensions of Alexander the Great Chatzikonstantinou Streets								Clothing, footwear, novelties, food, except rags and carpets.	Clothing, footwear, novelties, food, except rags and carpets.	Clothing, footwear, novelties, food, except rags and carpets.	Clothing, footwear, novelties, food, except rags and carpets.
Zone 8	Tr. Chatzi Street								Clothing, footwear, novelties, food.			

According to the rental fees demonstrated above, it is observed that the Market square is not as significant as it used to be, as it has been transformed from a place where the trade fair used to exclusively take place into a place where clothes, shoes, and haberdashery are sold, and it is also available for selling vegetables and fruits (Town Council Proceedings, 109/2000).

Indicator 3: Diversity of functions

The specific indicator demonstrates that the trade fair area in Amyntaio has undergone various changes as regards purpose and utility, ranging from conventional management throughout the year to a more particular type of management during the period that the trade fair takes place. It is worth pointing out that there are significant changes during the fair,

since for the organization of the event the entire town, as well as the town authorities are involved. However, the outer trade fair zones are considerably affected. The areas where great changes of function are observed are N. Hatzikonstantinou street (former Sophocleous street), which is transformed from a basic central street to a trade area, Gr. Nikolaidis and Col. Papapetrou streets, where there are public and municipal services, which are transformed into a street market area with greengrocery goods, and the extension of Alexander the Great and N. Hatzikonstantinou streets, which are residential areas without shops; in addition, Tr. Hatzis street, despite being a public walk, is transformed into a busy shopping area. It is, thus, evident that the change of utility of a place is directly related to the fact that the trade fair has expanded from the traditional centre to residential areas or areas with public or municipal services.

PI. 7. Diversity of current usage

Zones	Diversity of current usage
Zone 1	NO. Traditional trade area
Zone 2	NO. Traditional entertainment area
Zone 3	NO. Traditional the city center
Zone 4	YES. Main road transformed into trade area
Zone 5	YES. Main road transformed into a street market area
Zone 6	NO. Traditional trade area
Zone 7	YES. Residential area transformed into trade area
Zone 8	YES. Park

Indicator 4: Accessibility

The Municipality of Amyntaio is the hub along major highways, such as the highway from Kozani – Ptolemaida - Amyntaio – Florina – FYROM, and also a junction to Central Macedonia, Thessaloniki – Edessa – Amyntaio – Florina. In addition, the road under construction from Niki – Florina – Kozani – Larissa, which is going to be joined to the Egnatia Highway, will facilitate access to most areas in the country. Amyntaio is a junction of the railway road from Florina – Kozani – Thessaloniki, and a place where the railroad is split in branches, one to Florina and one to Kozani.

Since the 1950s there has been a bus service network that links the Municipality of Amyntaio to Florina, Kozani, Kastoria, Edessa and Thessaloniki, on a daily basis. The specific service is also available for the municipal departments near Amyntaio. In addition, there is a daily railway road service towards Florina-Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki-Kozani. Finally, one can travel to Amyntaio by taxi.

Accessibility to the trade fair area had been a central issue for the town Authorities and has frequently been used as an argument against transferring the fair to another area (Town Council Proceedings, 5742/1974). It is worth pointing out that transportation terminals are located in key points within the residential area. In the '50s and '60s, when the trade fair used to be held in the weekly street market area, bus and taxi terminals were around the town square. Similarly, during the '70s bus and taxi terminals remained in the same area. However, in the '80s the bus station was transferred to Sophocleous street, which during the fair is a market street with especially high rental fees, due to the fact that in the specific street there are stands with carpet-making goods. In addition, as the trade fair expanded, the taxi terminal was transferred to the west of the square. Since the 1990s the fair has expanded to the west and, thus, transportation is facilitated. The bus service terminal to Kastoria is located at the starting point of the relevant highway and the fair takes up part of the railway station, where carpet-making goods have been transferred. Nowadays, to travel to Amyntaio, apart from public transport means, visitors also use their own cars, which can be parked in the parking lots around the trade fair area.

Indicator 5: Safety

Safety and order are maintained by the police force in Amyntaio, who 'are committed to offering their help so that there are no problems during the trade fair', and also by a committee appointed by the Town Council and comprised of members of the Town Council and Local Authority officers, who are responsible for supervising fair retailers. In addition, the Town Council assigns the control and supervision of the trade fair to private security forces. According to the relevant regulations, 'in case that retailers cause damage to green spaces and trees in public places, they are obliged to pay fines, which are set by the committee in charge of supervising the trade fair' (Town Council Proceedings, 154/2005).

Indicator 6: Hygiene – Clean-up of the trade fair area

Poor hygiene, despite being a crucial problem during the period of the trade fair, has not been a factor to discourage visitors or prevent the fair from being held. Since 2000, the Town Council has decided that chemical toilets are installed in various parts around the trade fair area. Until then, there was no such provision either for the visitors or the retailers and traders, who could use only the 'public toilets' in the Railway station.

Vendors and retailers stay in caravans or in their own wagons and can use water from public pumps (one at the end of Tr. Hatzis street and one in the Railway station).

The town looks like a huge 'rubbish dump' after the fair. However, in the last few years, there are effective attempts to clean up the town. The town authorities are responsible for maintaining hygiene, picking up rubbish and cleaning up the streets.

9. Discussion

In general terms, the trade fair in Amyntaio, according to the basic indicators, is an institution that has not declined, but, in contrast, has been enhanced and contributed to town vitality and viability. In the middle 1980s, despite the expansion of the trade fair area, there was no essential differentiation between the original and current trade fair area. In the '90s, the change involved the expansion of the trade fair towards the Railway station. Nowadays, it is worth pointing out that the transfer of the fair from the traditional market centre of the town to residential areas and areas with public and transportation services has contributed to the town vitality and viability which are indicators that the institution at issue thrives.

The trade fair in Amyntaio has been an integral part of the area and can be divided in sections-zones, each of which maintains its own character, either commercial or recreational, as well as its economic potential. The most essential aspect of the fair is the fact that the town centre is used for other specific purposes during the five-day period of the trade fair. Areas that are conventionally used as arterial roads and areas where public services are located are transformed into recreational and trade areas. The fact that accessibility to the town is easy has also been conducive to the fair vitality and viability; thus, the town has been a pole of attraction of the people living in the wider area and visitors. Although safety and order are maintained during the fair period, hygiene and cleanness are the most important negative aspects of the trade fair. However, for the last few years, the Town Council has been seriously concerned with the hygiene and takes measures so that residents, retailers and visitors are not bothered.

The integration of the trade fair in the residential area of Amyntaio reveals the conscious decision of the Local Authorities to get involved in the economic and social life of the town. In addition, the fact that the trade fair has consistently been organized and has been expanding for the last 50 years since it was institutionalized is an indicator of the economic prosperity or the specific institution and evidence of the town vitality and viability. In conclusion, on the basis of the relevant information discussed above, it is argued that the trade fair in Amyntaio can contribute to the progress of the town in the future, and be a pole of attraction of retailers and visitors as well as a 'meeting point' of cultural opportunities from the past of local economy and culture to the present of universality.

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