Urban Design in Transferring Cultural Heritage to the Future

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to present a case study in traditional urban texture of Bartin. The plans targeting at the maintenance of historical urban texture has not been successfully put into practice yet. Therefore, the historical urban texture could not be preserved. Thus, there is an urgent need to utilize relevant design tools and design guides to preserve, restore, re-function and to improve historical city structure of Bartin. At first, physical conditions at historical urban texture has been researched in this case study. The problems were determined and the solutions has been suggested in accordance with the potentialities. By means of suggested urban design applications, sustainable preservation and continuity of cultural heritage are going to be achieved and a bridge between the past and the future are going to be built.

Key-Words: Cultural heritage, Cultural identity, Historical traces, Urban Design strategies

1 Introduction
As a result of the urban development, city centers are being transformed continuously. The humanitarian urban textures, neighborhoods and historical surroundings created by the preindustrial society in the process of adaptation to nature are disappearing gradually. Along with this process, the human dimension in cities is neglected, historical traces created by the cultural identity are fading away and the bonds between the people and the changing faces of the cities are diminishing.

In the process of reconciling the human and the city, it is imperative to create modern cities that preserve their cultural identities and to transmit the cultural heritage to the future generations. Therefore, it has to be kept in mind that the richness of the historical structure heritage cannot be sacrificed to modern construction [1].

2 The Role of Urban Design in the Process of Transferring Cultural Heritage to the Future
Historical settings are part of the cultural heritage that reflects the socio-economic and cultural structures, life-styles, architectural and aesthetic characteristics of past civilizations. Those settings have to be preserved in order to sustain the unique and universal cultures. Historical urban textures, urban spaces that take into consideration the human dimension, attract anyone with their rich composition, narrow-curved streets and delicate labor-work. They are not only fascinating examples but also informative and instructive ones.

Therefore, the basic target of planning the historical settings is to promote the cultural heritage by preserving and developing them. Preservation planning can be applied on a variety of scales, on a country in general, a single building or even city furniture in particular. The planning, applied on a country, a region, a neighborhood, a city, a street, a square and building groups is not only related to the city planning, but also the urban design.

A successful urban design assists to improve the urban quality and to create a space that is suitable for human habitation. This can only happen by focusing on the formation of cities at both macro and micro levels, ranging from the shape, quality, and location of the city furniture to the dimension of space, the relationship between the elements involved in the space and their relationship with their vicinity [2].

In accordance with the principle of protection/maintenance/development, urban design activities are indispensable in achieving structural and spatial integration to improve the quality and attractiveness of cities. Urban design is the sole means to guarantee the reconstruction of historical settings by integrating them with the contemporary surroundings; therefore, it enables the sustainability of historical development.

The process of urban design requires an integrative approach same as the process of urban
planning. In order to preserve the historical texture, every aspect and element of the city, from city to street dimension and from the building to street furniture, have to be interrelated with its environment and the city as a whole.

With urban design applications, preservation, sanitation and re-functioning of the assets that have the qualifications of being a cultural heritage will be possible. Therefore, they will be transmitted to future generations [3]. In this process, urban design approach has to reach a synthesis that is appropriate to national conditions, local characteristics, diversity, possibilities and potentials.

3 Method
The methodology of the case study is created at four stages.

The analysis of physical situation in the historical urban texture of Bartin were done at the first stage. The problems were determined at the second stage. Then the potentialities of the historical urban texture were considered aiming it could be transmitted to the future. In accordance with the physical conditions, the problems and potentialities of the built environment in the historical urban texture, the solutions were suggested and the Urban Design strategies were improved at the last stage.

4 Physical Conditions
4.1 Historical Development of Bartin Settlement
Bartin, a settlement located in the North-west Black Sea region of Turkey with a population of around 36,000, takes its name from the Bartin River. The river was named from “Pharthenius” that means “the God of Water” and “Young Virgin” in the years BC. Bartin, which is encircled by greens, has a 59 km coastal line along the Black Sea.

Stretching 12 km from the sea to inside the land, Bartin River had enabled intense trade activities with the outside world and had played a crucial role in the formation, development and settlement structure of the city. Because of Bartin River’s convenience of transporting goods on its waterway, the region had been a highly active trade and market center. Then, it changed into a settlement as a result of the need for accommodation caused by trade activities. At that time, the river became a social space for cultural activities such as fairs to gather the local people. This cultural ceremonies have to re-animate and transmit to the future.

4.2 Urban morphology
The densely settled part of the city is on a peninsula surrounded by rivers and connected to its environs through bridges (Fig.1).

The existing city center of Bartin, which has been an important trade, production and cultural center since the 19th century, still keeps its characteristics of a traditional trade center. In the city center, there are examples of civil architecture and monumental buildings such as public fountains, trade-accommodations (khans), Turkish baths and mosques. The city center is composed of brick-made buildings of 2, 3 or 4 stories. It was closed for auto traffic and has become a pedestrian zone. Around the city center, in which trade activities take place, there are housing areas, however, their density declines when moving away from the center. Buildings in residential areas are composed of houses and apartment-complex with 4 or 5 stories.
As a result, disharmony between the traditional architecture and the new buildings came into existence.

Thus, there is an urgent need to utilize relevant design tools and design guides to improve, restore and re-function historical city structure of Bartin. Particularly, in the streets that have historical examples of civil architecture, it is imperative to create a bridge between the past and the future.

6 The Potentials and the Scenarios
The city has a tourism potential due to natural, historical and cultural values of it.

The most strong scenario relation to the city in the future is that the city has to be acquired a tourism identity all over it. There are some projects aiming this scenario. One of the most essential projects in this context is to keep the Bartin River alive and to integrate it into the daily life. This can be achieved by urban design projects that would allow the river correlate to the streets stretching to it.

The other projects, not only aiming this scenario but aiming conservation the historical urban texture, are Urban Design Projects and Urban Design Applications in urban restoration and urban conservation context.

Khans in the city center have the spatial potentialities for new uses in accordance with the tourism potential of the city. Some of the samples of civil architecture to be left by owners can be re-functioned as a café or a restaurant also.

7 Urban Design Strategies on a Case Street Reflecting the Historical Urban Texture of Bartin

7.1 The characteristics of Samancioglu street
Samancioglu Street, one of the streets in the historical urban texture, is close to the city center and stretches to the river (Fig.1). It has an old building restored and re-functioned to be use as a city museum. For that reason, this street was decided on the case study.

Almost all of the buildings on this street are used as residences and they are detached houses with gardens. Only in the two buildings situated on both sides of the street at the entrance from the city center, the whole land is used as the base land and the ground floors are used for commercial purposes.

Almost all of the buildings on this street are used as residences and they are detached houses with gardens. Only in the two buildings situated on both on this street, the relation between the street and the buildings is executed by front gardens. The linear-structured street has wooden houses with two or three floors and bay windows or balconies. The houses exhibit a unique example of civil architecture peculiar to Bartin. The constructions of these 100, 150, 200-years-old houses consist of wooden pillars and beams. The surfaces of most of these examples of civil architecture having wooden constructions are covered with timber on all sides. Only one of them is covered with timber on one floor and plaster on another. The ground floors of these building are higher than the street level and have a single or a couple of stairs.

7.2 Urban Design suggestions for Samancioglu street
Taking the typologies of the buildings, frontages, garden walls, into account and considering the principles of conservation, re-animation, re-function, the urban design strategies was determined. In accordance with the scenarios relation to the city, the suggestions was improved.

The suggestions for this street can be considered for the other street in historical urban texture of the city.

7.2.1 The street as a public space
Street is a public space where its inhabitants meet each other and interact as they come across when going out of their private spaces. Streets of Bartin constitute the historical urban texture of the city, thus, they are not only passages for city dwellers, but also a space for living and meeting for inhabitants of that particular street.

Fig.2 Samancioglu street
In accordance with urban design project, Samancioglu street should be re-organized as a pedestrian street and the motor vehicles should not be allowed in. Street ground has to be covered by granite cobble-stones or bricks, which would keep the harmony with the stones used in the traditional street texture (Fig.2).

In the future, many people will visit the street due to the city museum. Therefore, some of the buildings in the street can be re-functioned in tourism potential context as a café or a restaurant.

7.2.2 Building frontages and garden walls determining the borders of private spaces

Building frontages and garden walls determine not only the borders of private and public spaces, but also the relations between these spaces. Bay windows and balconies, vertical and horizontal elements, details and equipments on the frontages of the buildings constitute an interface between public and private spaces. They are also the spatial elements that reflect the relationship between the building and its vicinity, as well as the life style in the period it was built.

The wooden houses in Samancioglu street are the documents of the unique architectural style that formed the historical urban texture of Bartin. Therefore, when implementing a design project for the buildings on this street, this peculiar architectural typology has to be taken into account. For instance, in the traditional building frontages the ratio of the window dimension is $\frac{1}{2}$. The windows are opened by sliding from bottom to top. Accordingly, new arrangements were suggested for new building frontages that are in harmony with the fullness-emptiness ratio, scales and materials of the traditional ones (Fig.3).

Regarding the garden walls, in order to perpetuate the extroverted life style and to form a structural integration, all of the garden walls should be designed below the eye level and they should be either built by stones or bricks. On top of the garden walls, wooden or patterned iron fences that do not block the eye-sight should be placed.

7.2.3 Semi-private and semi-public spaces: house gardens

House gardens are private spaces in terms of ownership. However, in societies where privacy and secrecy are not primordial, house gardens are semi-public spaces, since they can be seen by other people passing by the street. Therefore, as being spaces that supply visual data for the occupants of the public space, house gardens should be designed with great care and their structural and plant design should be done accordingly.

Planting trees in the front gardens of these houses in Samancioglu street would enable the passers-by to see the nature in its structural environment and contribute to the green outlook of the city. In the selection of the colors, shapes and sizes of the plants in the front gardens of these wooden houses, plant design should be done so as to allow a better sight of both building frontages and plant clusters.

7.2.4 Street equipment

Sitting equipments, waste-bins, illumination elements and public fountains to be placed on the street are all considered as street equipments. In the design and selection of these items, the foremost principle should be to keep the harmony with the historical urban texture and the architectural identity of the area. The practicality, durability and the ease of maintenance should also be taken into consideration. Sitting equipment to be placed on the relevant plots on the street should have a wrought iron construction and should be covered with impregnated timber.

Street illumination equipments should be preferably 2.5 meters high. Illumination for the houses should be provided by lambs placed on the garden walls and on both sides of the entrance gates. The original fountain made of iron in front of Samancioglu house, the details of the house given below, should be preserved. On the same street, the
other fountain should be restored complementing the other.

7.2.5 A landmark: Kemal Samancioglu City Museum

The house of Kemal Samacioglu, a well-known house belonging to Samancioglu family, is now being restored to be used as Bartin City Museum. Kemal Samancioglu is the former mayor of Bartin, who left his name in the history of Bartin by his distinguished urban projects. Giving this building a new function as a museum will make it a landmark at urban scale.

The garden design of the museum has been applied in accordance with the needs of the visitors. Traditional building elements in the garden like a bakery, the well and the stand for washing clothes are intended to be revitalized; and thus new functions may be suggested for these items. To provide the illumination of the museum and the garden at night, appropriate projectors and illuminating equipments will be placed on the building, the garden and the yard. Accordingly, illuminating equipments of 1.5 – 2.5 meters and ground illumination should be utilized.

7.2.6 Connections: integrating Samancioglu street to the river

As it has been mentioned above, Samancioglu street is a street that reflects the city structure of Bartin and stretches to the river. The urban restoration of Samancioglu street is one of the major components of the whole project of revitalizing the Bartin River with tourism and recreation activities. Accordingly, as in the old times, a wharf could be constructed by the river upright towards the street. The wharf would facilitate the visitors to reach the street through the river.

8 Conclusion

Today, as a result of the development and the growth of the built environment, it has been hard to preserve and maintain both the historical traces that shape the cultural identity and the historical urban texture that constitutes a significant part of the cultural heritage. In order to avoid disappearance of the historical urban texture and to transmit it to the future, urban design applications are crucial in the restoration and reconstruction process. For this reason, there is a need to utilize certain design tools and design guides for orienting the design applications at urban and street scale. Urban design is as important as urban planning on behalf of the community design. Since, while settling the spatial rules in the course of urban design, community design is also realized. Of course the Urban Design is the appropriate instrument for creating the spatial facilities of the urban life and the social life of a community.

Therefore, integrative approach should be the only criterion in both low-scale and high-scale planning and design. It is necessary to integrate the area and the elements under focus into its vicinity and the city as a whole. This has to be done from city to street scale and from buildings to street equipment. All in all, the historical urban texture has to be restored by taking into consideration the traditional architectural typology.

Urban preservation and urban design applications should be applied on the street scale not only in the areas which constitute the historical city structure, but also the ones that are excluded from the borders of historical urban texture. In these regions, innovative city furniture designs should be developed. In the selection and design of city equipment (sitting elements, illumination elements, flower beds, phone boxes, garden walls, waste bins etc.) the materials to be used should be in harmony with the color and structure of the historical urban texture.

Urban Design Strategies in historical urban texture of Bartin:

- Determination of a protective land-use policy in planning and application process.
- Adoption of the principles of conservation, restoration, re-animation, re-function and sustainability.
- Protection of the historical traces and maintain the traditional architecture.
- Restoration of the historical buildings to be damaged.
- Re-function of some buildings in the historical urban texture in tourism potential context.
- Integration of the new built environment with the traditional buildings.
- Production of the typologies for new building to provide suitability with the cultural identity and traditional architecture.
- Creation of the new spatial usages for pedestrians.
- Close of some of the streets for auto traffic and reduce the negative effects of it on the streets.
• Correlation of the river to the streets stretching it with the wharfs.
• Preparation of the Urban Design guides.

Finally, in this paper, urban design suggestions are presented concerning the renewal and restoration of Samancioglu street. This particular street is a symbol of historical urban texture of Bartin. By means of suggested urban design applications, sustainable preservation and continuity of cultural heritage will be achieved and a bridge between the past and the future will be built.

References: