Urban Landscape Design Strategies on 3000 Years Settlement: Amasra

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Abstract: -In Turkey, one of the countries which have a lot of historical environments which are different from each other in quality point of view, most of the settlements have begun to lose their historical identities. Every kind of design and arrangement should consider historical environment and create harmony between historical buildings and new buildings. Especially, in some settlements having tourism potential, this design action should include some suggestions regarding both protection and sustainability of cultural heritage. The only way to provide sustainable protection and to transmit cultural heritage from the past to the future is urban design and landscape design in accordance with necessity and current tendency of the community. In this paper, with the aim of protection and sustainability of the cultural heritage of Amasra, which is full of ancient civilizations, design strategies on its urban landscape have been developed.

Key-Words: - Historical environment, Sustainability, Urban conservation, Urban design, Urban landscape design.

1 Introduction

The story of the man, which created organic city textures on the earth, has changed. At the result of changes in social and economic life, increase of population, industrialization and technological development, historical environments have been ruined. Together with the historical environment, humanitarian city texture ruined, dimension of the man has been lost in the settlements. Consequently, the link between man and his changed environment has been broken off. To reconcile the man with his environment in which he lives, it is necessary to design man's environment and urban landscape [1].

Most of the settlements in Turkey are full of traces of the ancient civilizations which lived in different time from each other. These traces, which reflect that Turkey has historical and cultural richness, have been side by side or one after the other. It is time to consider, to protect and to develop historical settlements in Turkey. It is of great importance that harmony either in the historical environment or between historical environment and the whole city should be provide in design process.

Amasra, one of the settlements in Turkey, which have natural and cultural heritage, has attracted many people at national and global level, due to its increasing tourism potential. In this paper, urban design strategies regarding sustainability and protection of the cultural heritage of Amasra, which has a 3000 year old history, have been presented as a case study.

2   Conservation and Urban Design

Firstly, with a national planning approach, national policy on environment should be determined and decided how to make environmental protection plans. The basic aim of planning of the historical environment is to protect cultural heritage, to assess it and to transmit it to the next generation. Planning aiming protection has a large extent from the whole country to the building scale and even to the urban equipment.

Protection planning at the scale of country, region, environment, city, street, square and building groups has strong relation to urban design to close the gap between urban planning and restoration of the buildings.

Historical urban textures are pieces of the whole settlement. The decision on these areas should be made considering decisions on the whole area. All

components of historical environment should be protected, developed and integrated with the other parts of the settlement. It should also be improved with new usages.

City is a place in which community live. City is a settlement where human's actions have turned into culture and reflected the culture. Cities or settlements have been planned and designed from the beginning to now. But most of them have been formed out of efforts of the planners and urban designers. Some settlements have stated that relations among the nature, man and community could not be enabled healthy spatial structures.

Although settlements can not be formed completely by designers, urban design and urban landscape design can contribute to formation of the settlements from urban spaces to urban equipments. A lot of matters regarding the formation both at macro and micro levels of settlements can be solved by design. Urban environment which can be lived in can be created by urban landscape design.

Urban design and landscape design is interface between planning and architecture and is a bridge between private spaces and public spaces.

The concept of conservation or urban conservation has been come out at the result of a cultural process [2]. In this context, urban conservation is not an approach which has only one dimension from cultural point of view, but also is an approach which includes economic and social processes providing the sustainability of urban life. Urban conservation has gained a meaning of improvement and re-functioning, beyond physical protection, by means of urban design.

3 Method

In this study, historical structure of Amasra, a 3000 year old settlement, has been taking into account and urban design strategies have been developed.

Five subtopics have created case study held in this paper. Within the first subtopic, topographic structure and history of Amasra have presented. Under the second, present situation of the settlement has mentioned. In the next, potentials to be improved have been evaluated, and within the fourth one, urban landscape design strategies standing for urban design and landscape design strategies regarding Amasra have been determined.

Lastly, cultural resource management has been emphasized to sustain both urban conservation and transmitting cultural heritage to next generations.

4   A   3000   Year   Old   Settlement: Amasra

4.1 The topography of the settlement and the history of its development

Amasra is situated on the edge of the Black Sea. The settlement is located both on the plain and the hillside areas. Urban area of Amasra is settled on seven hills, five peninsulas and two islands. Amasra is a historical harbor built on a peninsula. It has two harbors, one of which is Kücük Liman (Small Harbor) and the other is Büyük Liman (Big Harbor). These two harbors create the beauties of Amasra which is pupil of the world as Sultan Fatih of Ottoman said [3].

Amasra and its surroundings occurred during carbon period of I. time. So there is a great deal of coal mine under the earth in Amasra.
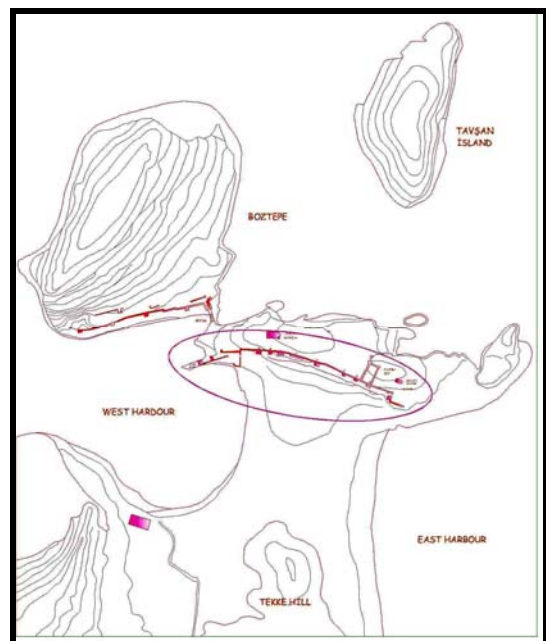

Fig.1 Amasra Citadel and Citadel District

Amasra has a wonderful urban landscape, whose history dates back to 12th century B.C. Amasra, one of the most beautiful towns on the Black Sea coast, was

called Sesamos in ancient times, when it was founded by the Miletians in the sixth century B.C. It stands on a peninsula split by two inlets (Fig.1). On the rocky promontory rise the ramparts of the Byzantine citadel, inside of which is an old church, now the Fatih Mosque. The necropolis dates from the Roman period.

Amasra is a centre of archaic settlement and rich in terms of historical monuments. Amasra is full of traces and documents of Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, Genoese and Ottoman Period. Marbel monuments, statues, statue heads, grave steles, copper kitchen vessels, weapons, writing sets, candlesticks, stamps, scales, ceramics, rings, vessels, stone monuments and various embossed architectural objects reflecting all the periods, an art specific to the Amasra region in ancient times have been exhibited in Amasra Museum.

4.2 Present situation of settlement

Settlements and buildings reflect the culture of the society and region they belong to. In Amasra, like in Turkey, there is one aspect of the development of tourism which was harmful for historic sites. Since the archaeological and historic sites are the primary items on the programs of tour operators, and since these sites were once established on the eminent and well chosen sites of the landscape, speculative new developments take place around.

Unfortunately, the growth of Amasra could not be managed in accordance with a good planning. There is dense texture of buildings in the center, due to small plot of lands.

In districts settled at periphery of the citadel and of downtown most houses are lack of gardens but some have a small courtyard. In the district inside of the citadel, streets are narrow and most buildings are adjacent to each other.

When considering the whole settlement, it can be clearly seen that disorderly appearance of built environment in Amasra is dominant.

4.3 Potentials

Amasra is a costal settlement and mostly a fishing town. The townspeople for centuries have always loved the sea and fish and the town has been a favored port in the stormy Black Sea. The fishermen have remained at port awaiting the end of the storm and during the severe winter months the houses of Amasra have harbored fishermen for whole six-month seasons as they awaited the coming of spring. The sea and fish continued to play an important role in the development of contemporary tourism in the area. The boarding-houses in the town are run by the townspeople. The people of Amasra opened their houses to tourists long before the first hotel or boarding-house was built to accommodate visitors. One of the economical resources in Amasra is tourism sector.

Amasra has attracted a lot of tourists from many countries because of its natural and cultural heritage. Besides natural values, there are numerous traces of various civilizations which lived in Amasra, which is 3000 years old, in different periods. Its unique natural structure and 3000 years historical texture have made Amasra into attractive tourism region since 1940. Although Amasra has a great deal of tourism potential, built environment has lost historical and cultural identity day by day, due to lack of consciousness of both local administrations and majority of the community.

The links between tourism and the environment are so numerous [4]. Some settlements have developed, whereas some have been destroyed and have lost cultural and historical identity. When looking from positive point of view, tourism is the best contributor historical environment to develop and even to provide sustainable environment.

4.4 Urban design and landscape design strategies on Amasra

At first glance, the connection between urban design and tourism seems tenuous. But on closer examination, it becomes apparent that urban design is a major contributor to the basic infrastructure of a successful tourist industry in historical environment [5]. In the creation or rehabilitation of the historical urban landscape, it is essential that integration between historical environment and architectural texture should be provided, and so continuous appearance of historical city should be aimed.

Principles of urban design and of urban landscape design are:

- The settlement should be divided into design units and visual regions. Restrictions should be determined in accordance with the characteristics of every unit and every region.

- Buildings should be evaluated with new functions and new uses in the context of tourism potential.
- In historical city centers and historical city textures, motorized vehicles should not be permitted to pass through narrow streets, but pedestrians be allocated.
- Historical buildings losing original characteristics should be rehabilitated.
- Building facades should be designed and recreated in a way to provide visual integrity and harmony with historical environment.
- Harmony between urban equipments and historical environment.
- Pavements should be harmonious with the historical environment.
- Urban equipments should be designed and put into place in a way to emphasize historical environment.
- The standards of equipments not causing visual contamination should be developed.
- Historical environment should be emphasized by vegetal design.
- Surroundings of the historical buildings should be surrounded by open green areas.
- Natural elements and groups of trees should be protected. Vegetal material in the gardens of monumental buildings and of traditional architecture samples should be protected. In rehabilitation and restoration process, house gardens should be planned and designed in accordance with theirs original features.

4.4.1 Case area: citadel district

Citadel built during Genoese period. Citadel district has been a settled area since this period. Recently, most houses in this district have been used to accommodate tourists coming to Amasra, besides hotels in other parts of the settlement. There are one mosque and one church showing different civilization lived in this district. Few of the buildings of citadel district reflect traditional architecture, but most of them are new buildings which cause visual disorder in historical environment.

4.4.2 Urban landscape design guide of Citadel District

In urban design process, which is an interface between urban planning and architecture, it is necessary to prepare design guides in order to provide a harmoniously relation between public space and private space.

Having prepared design guides, designers have written some rules regarding built environment they want to see. Design guides are urban guides giving information about principles regarding how to built new buildings and how to provide sustainability of historical and cultural heritage. Design guides have a lot of details regarding streets, facades, windows, doors, equipment of the buildings, urban and public equipments.

In the case area, in accordance with urban design and landscape design principles determined as mentioned above, a study has been conducted on Kemere Street, which is inside of the ramparts (Fig.2).

In the context of this study, various suggestions regarding built environment on this street have been developed. These suggestions have included restoration or rehabilitation of the buildings (Fig.3), building facades (Fig.4), creation of open green areas especially around the ramparts. They have also included several suggestions regarding garden walls, windows, building materials and urban equipments to provide a harmonic environment.

It has been taken into account to emphasize historical identity of the district thanks to all suggestions of urban design and landscape design.

4.5 Cultural Resource Management

It is essential for sustainability of the environment created by means of urban design strategies considering historical and cultural values that cultural resource management should be provided.

The protection and improvement of man's environment are among the fundamental conditions for the harmonious development of settlements. Similarly, rational management of cultural resources may contribute to a large extent to protecting and developing the physical environment and the cultural heritage, as well as improving the quality of life.

It is of great importance that management of well-planned and well-designed environment should be enabled for sustainability.
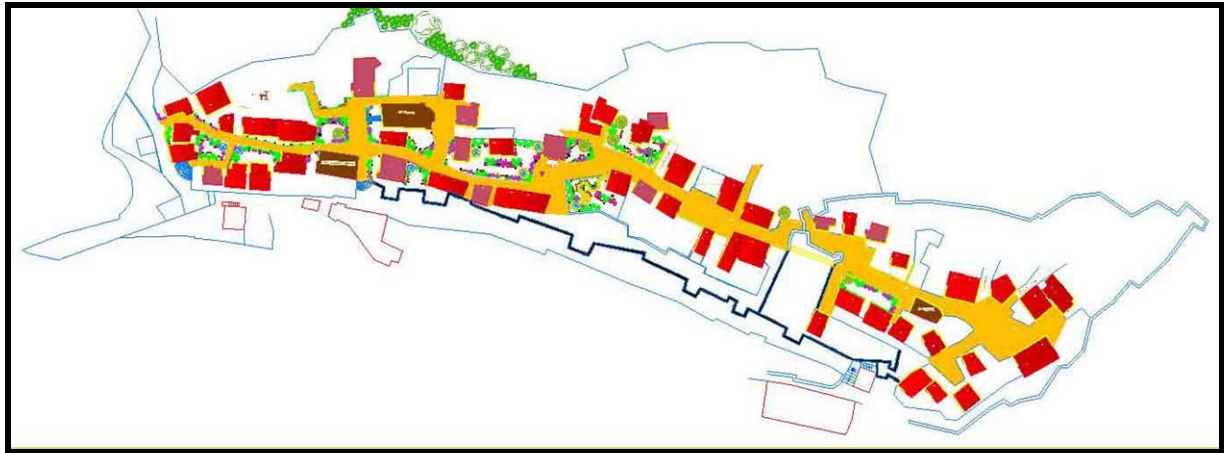
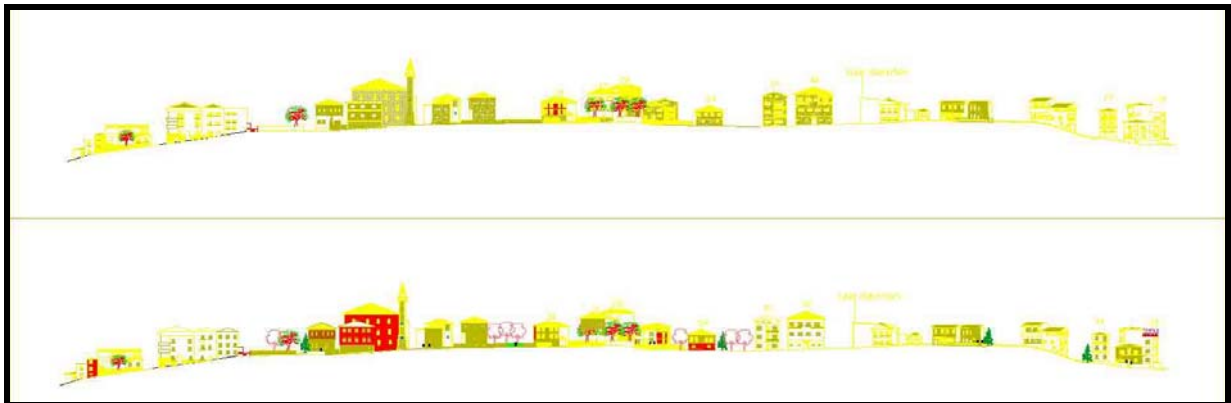Fig.2 Kemere Street in citadel district

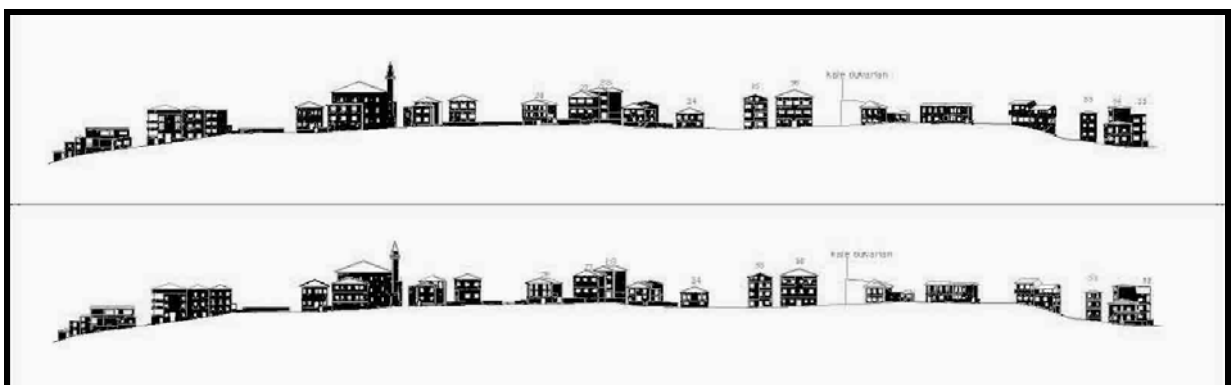Fig.3 Present facades and suggested facades on Kemere Street

Fig.4 Analysis of present and alternative facades

6 Conclusions

In the process of rehabilitation, restoration, renovation of the historical city texture, urban design is the best tool to provide both protection and sustainability of historical heritage.

It is time to consider historical traces that settlements have. Firstly design policies should be determined. Design policies embrace urban design, architecture, landscape and conservation. Urban design policies should be given priority to emphasize that design is more than external appearance [6]. In urban design process, major emphasis should be placed on public space policies to make man at peace with his environment.

We have to rethink the relationship of tourism and conservation which is a cultural act. It can be suggested that an historical environment should be physically and visually separated from the new developments. The best way to protect and to provide sustainability is to take advantage of tourism because of the opportunity given by tourism.

Besides well-planned and well designed settlements together with historical environments, it is necessary that cultural resource management should be provided for sustainability.

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