Journal of Agricultural Faculty of Uludag University, 2016,
Volume 30, Number: Special Issue, 661-668

Evaluating Local Features of Gölyazı in Terms of Cultural Landscape

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ABSTRACT

Cultural landscape is a mutual product of human and nature. Local features, on the other hand, are the indicators of genuine and affluent cultural landscape. The areas which are able to preserve their local features, provide available space for various kind of recreational activities besides their genuine values, their effect on space perception and improving the sense of belonging. Such kind of cultural landscape is offered as touristic turnouts and they form a kind of attractive and directive force when recreational and tourism activities are considered. However, urban development and conversion cause transformation on conventional settlements in time and thus change the genuine values of these settlements. With modernisation great numbers of conventional settlements are being abandoned or their local features, which are their genuine characteristics, are being destroyed through conversion. Unless a kind of sufficient and conscious planning is made for these spaces, they are to face the danger of losing their genuine local feature values. In this study, which aims to set forth a planning conclusion on protecting cultural landscape efficiently, local features that are of important components of cultural landscape have been evaluated on the scale of Gölyazı sample and its supplementary role on cultural landscape has been aimed to be put forward. Data acquisition, analysis, synthesis and assessment constitute the study methods.

Keywords: Local feature, Cultural landscape, Gölyazı, Bursa

INTRODUCTION

Human habitat is not only a physical space that consists of natural elements but also a mental-conceptual one. Culture, which forms the conceptual space, represents the lifestyle of human beings (Baylan, E., 2003). Cultural landscape is, on the other hand, a term with a quite broad content and it is defined in various ways as described below:

Cultural landscape represents the interventions of human beings on the nature in parallel with their needs and the traces of these interventions that have developed and changed throughout the history and have reached the present day (Anonim 2015). The European Council defines cultural landscape as defined plots of lands that are formed by artificial and natural factors together and which have been identified with different social values within historical process (Özsüle, Z., 2005). When natural landscape is processed by a cultural group, cultural landscape emerges as a result. In this case, culture is the main factor; natural landscape is a means and cultural landscape is the result (Leighly, J., 1965). Unlike natural landscape, cultural landscape includes the spaces that have undergone substantial changes as a result of human activities.

The term "cultural landscape" is also important as it keeps the former and current customs of the region where local people live (UNESCO, 1998). Cultural landscape is a means that builds a bridge between the significant historical events and today and doing so, it enables history to be understood. Values that belong to the societies that lived in the past and identified man-made physical ruins are parts of cultural landscape. Therefore; cultural landscape which is utilised as a touristic element should be preserved in order to ensure progress and sustainability in tourism (Leader-Elliott, L., 2005).

Cultural landscape properties contribute in local development as tourist attractions (Kaya, L.G., 2002; UNESCO, 1999). The spaces utilised by tourism have great diversity. Cultural landscapes that have been able to preserve their local characteristics are being offered as touristic elements and they bear leading and attractive effects on tourism activities. Cultural landscapes are among those effects due to their unique local characteristics. Cultural tourism is mostly carried out on cultural landscapes that have local identity and authenticity.

Urban development and transformation cause spatial transformation on traditional settlements in time and change the authentic values of these traditional settlements. Lots of traditional settlements lose their unique characteristics and local features either because of the changes that came with modernity or because of being abandoned. Unless sufficient and conscious planning is carried out on these spaces, those mentioned unique local characteristics are to face the danger of extinction.

Local characteristics are the indicators of authentic and substantial cultural landscapes. The areas that are able to preserve their local characteristics until present day, are of great importance because of their authentic values, their effect on space perception and also because of creating an awareness on protecting one's own culture by improving the sense of belonging. For this reason, it is necessary to increase accurate information about cultural landscape and to preserve the cultural landscapes efficiently. Starting from this point of view, local features that are of important components of cultural landscape have been evaluated on the scale of Gölyazı sample and its supplementary role on cultural landscape has been aimed to be put forward in the study.

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials

The main material of the study is Gölyazı Village, which is located within the borders of Nilüfer District of Bursa Province in Marmara Region (Figure 1). Former studies related to the issue, domestic and foreign sources, the data gathered through the internet and the data acquired through field study with the photos taken have also been utilised as materials.



Figure 1. The Location of Gölyazı Village.

Methods

The study consists of data acquisition, analysis, synthesis and assessment. The flow chart of the process is given in figure 2. It is necessary to conduct plenty of field surveys in order to understand the landscape accurately. Therefore, researches have been carried out in different seasons, on different days and at different hours in a year and the findings have been evaluated with an expert perspective in the study.



Figure 2. Flow chart.

RESULTS

Natural Characteristics

Cultural landscape is a mutual outcome of the human and the nature. Natural characteristics, on the other hand, form the main frame of cultural landscape development. It is necessary to have information background on the natural landscape of an area to understand its cultural landscape.

Gölyazı Village, which is the study area, is 35 km from Bursa towards Karacabey. It is 6 km from the main road to the South. The settlement is located on a peninsula which is linked to the main land through a narrow line on the eastern point of the lake Uluabat (*Apollont Lake*).

Cultural landscapes are composed of varying areas in different scales. These scales may be either quite large or rather small. Total residential area of Gölyazı including agricultural lands is 615 hectares and the altitude is 125 m (410 ft). Lake water rising up to four meters during winter floods the road that links two different neighbourhoods of the same village and the settlement becomes a kind of island in winter (Figure 3). From this aspect, the village is a kind of natural, local and genuine landscape. Uluabat Lake, on the shore of which lies the village, is located in east-west direction with the dimensions 23 or 24 km in length and 12 km in width. It is the 10th biggest lake of Turkey with its surface area of 13,500 hectares. The average depth of the lake

is 2.5 metres. A great part of the lake is shallow and in these shallow parts the depth varies up to 2 metres at most (URL-1). Following the rainfall, water of the lake that has a broad and shallow basin rises and water floods relatively hollow areas. The surface area of the lake exceeds 160 km² then (Şenol, F., 2008).



Figure 3. A View from Gölyazı Village.

Gölyazı village displays slightly inclined topographic characteristics. The average annual temperature is 14.5 °C. The most rainy days are seen in December, January and February throughout the year. The average number of clear days is 76 whereas the cloudy ones is 170. Strong winds are not seen and the village is covered with snow nearly for 3 to 15 days.

Flora and fauna, which are of natural resources, constitute an important part of cultural landscape. The village has a mixed plant cover including scrubs, meadows and trees. The ecological characteristics of Uluabat Lake and its surroundings cause indigenous plant species grow on the mentioned area. Uluabat Lake is considered as the richest one in Turkey in terms of both plant and animal species. Northern and western coasts of the lake consist of reeds and marshes and various kinds of aquatic plants exist here (Figure 4). The pygmy cormorant, the Dalmatian pelican, the whiskered tern and the ferruginous duck, which are among endangered species both in national and international scales, live around the lake. The Bleak (Clupeonella abrau muhlisi), an endemic species which is among internationally endangered ones, also live in the lake where otters live as well. According to the inventory studies in January 1996, 429,423 aquatic birds were counted (URL-1).



Figure 4. Uluabat Lake and Aquatic Plants.

The lake was acknowledged as a Ramsar Site in April 1998 by the Ministry of Environment. Besides, it was included in Living Lakes network which is a project by international nongovernmental organizations cooperation dated as November 2000. The network includes globally known 19 lakes by the year 2001 (URL-1). It is one of the most important lakes in Turkey as well. Any kind of threat directed to the lake, affects Gölyazı directly as the main source of income is fishing (URL-2). The lake has a First Degree Natural Protected Area status.

Uluabat Lake, which is a large and shallow freshwater lake, includes 11 islands and reefs size of which vary from 0.25 ha (Heybeli island) to190 ha(Halilbey island). When sorted according to their size from biggest tosmallest, the islands are Halilbey island, Terzioğlu(Süleyman Efendi) island, Manastır (Nail Bey island, Mutlu island) island, Arif Molla (Molla Efendi island), Şeytan island, Kerevit the Major and Kerevit the Minor islands, Bulut island, Kız island and Heybeli island. The most important ones among them are, Halil Bey, Heybeli and Kız islands. They are formed of Jurassic limestone. These islands function as seawalls on stormy days (URL-1). Some of the islands are first degree natural protected areas whereas some are first degree archeologically protected areas.

Cultural Characteristics

The initial settlement of Gölyazı village, which used to be a small Greek village until 1920s, is 2,500 years old or even older that can be traced to Roman times. Historical settlement patterns are cultural landscape areas that keep urban memories alive and through that they add meaning and value to the area and enrich the sense of belonging in especially those who share the same historical background. The region is named by Apollo, the god of prophecy, and is built upon the ancient Apollonia's ruins. Gölyazı has important features in terms of the common history of Turks and Greeks. While it was a village where the Turks and the Greek used to live together (although the Greeks outnumbered the Turks) during Ottoman times, now it is a village where mostly the immigrants from Salonika, who settled as a result of population exchange, live. 2015 data indicate the total population of the village as 1441 of people 719 of whom are male and 722 female.

The village, which became a member of "Association of Historical Towns" in 2006, is a kind of outdoor museum. Gölyazı village was declared as a protected area in 1980. 80 of the two-storey Greek houses with a bay window and in construction of which ancient building stones were used with wood conformably are registered and taken under preservation. The topographic features of the site, climate, local materials, lifestyle and economic structure have affected the formation of civilian architecture in the region (Figure 5). Conventional dwelling and settlement patterns are physical cultural elements that certify the persistence of the society. Besides, these elements form a kind of residential memory and bind the elements of the society not only to each other but also the habitat (Özsüle, Z., 2005).

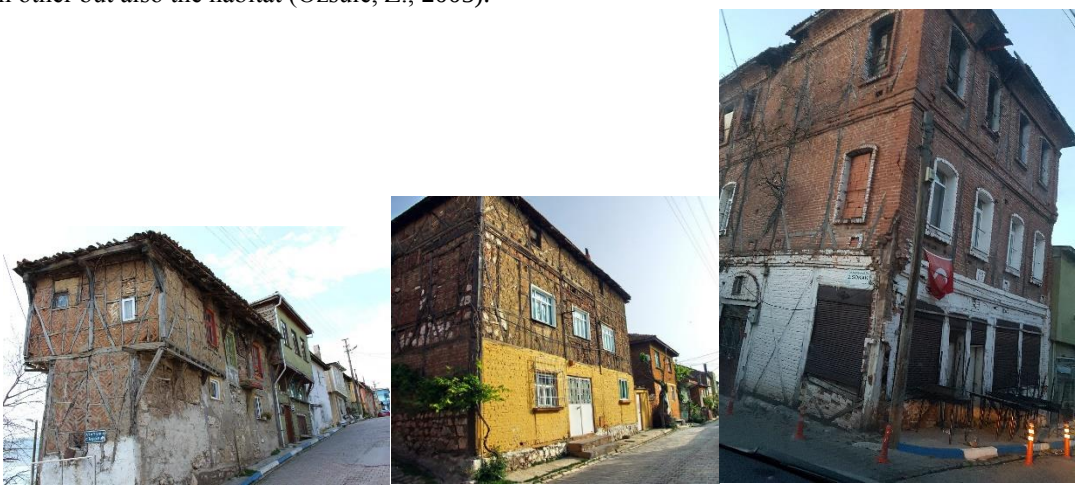


Figure 5. The Houses under Preservation.

It is possible to discover the ruins of Gates and towers belonging to the Hellenistic period on the 800 metres long ancient city walls that surround the current settlement. An ancient theatre belonging to Roman period with a capacity of 4 thousand people on Zambaktepe to the southern shoulder; the ancient aqueduct and burial chambers on the region called Deliktaş are other historical patterns. (Figure 6).



Figure 6. Views from Historical Patterns in Gölyazı Village.

Major mysterious ruins are buried under the islets around Gölyazı where any archaeological excavations have not been carried out yet. The ruins of the Temple of Apollo, which is figured on the coins found at the region, is commonly assumed to be located on Kız Island which is in 500 metres north of the ancient city.

Historical buildings are exactly like extinct creatures in an ecosystem. It is completely impossible to reproduce when they totally disappear. Therefore, they are remarkable elements of the cultural landscape. Gölyazı possesses such kind of important historical buildings. The building that used to be a church once, has been renovated and is being used as a cultural centre now. The building called "Göl Yazıevi" is at writers' service. A renovated windmill also exists in the village (Figure 7). Other historical elements in the village are; Deliktaş (an aqueduct), Taşkapı (ancient fortress ruins), the historical mosque and the public bath (the exact date of construction is still not known), the ruins of ancient Apollo Temple on Kız island, the ancient theatre ruins, city walls surrounding the peninsula, Hagios Georgios Church and the ruins of Hagios Konstantinos Church on Manastır island. The village bares physical traces that had witnessed historical events.



Figure 7. Samples of Historical Buildings in Gölyazı (The Windmill and the Church).

Moreover, mythological stories on the history of the village and the sad story of the weeping plane tree are local elements. Mythological stories enhance the sense of belonging with their bonding feature; create an impact of perceptibility with their noticeability and evoke various emotions with impressive aspect.

The tree which stands at the village centre and is called the weeping plane tree because of the juice leaking from its trunk was recorded to be 725 years old in 1998. Its shade size is about 400 metres. The weeping plane tree, which is one of the symbolic plane trees of Gölyazı and thus of Bursa, is a focus of interest both for domestic and foreigner tourists with both its view and its story (Figure 8).



Figure 8. The Weeping Plane Tree.

Cultural landscapes are shaped according to the interaction between human beings and their natural environment. Natural environment characteristics of this region shapes the source of living of the local people to be fishing and agricultural activities. Fishing is the main source of living and this creates a typical Aegean or Mediterranean fishing village atmosphere in Marmara Region. 90 % of town economy depends on not only fishing catfish, horned pike and carp and crawfish (freshwater lobster) hunt but also on relating lines of work such as fish netting, dealing hunting staff, boat mending and boat tours on the lake and to the islands. 10 % on the other hand, depends on olive, fig, milk and meat products, egg, honey and hen production.

The streets of the village where fishing is the source of living are other elements of the cultural landscape to be viewed. The streets all heading to the lake are of the local and authentic values of the village with coffeehouses; detached or low rise, tile roofed houses; villagers making or repairing nets; preparing fishing rods and turning over fish (Figure 9).



Figure 9. Street views from Gölyazı.

Gölyazı village offers authentic and local products not only to the visitors but also to its inhabitants with its great variety of agricultural products. The impacts of fishery can be clearly seen on the cuisine. In addition to fish dishes cooked by conventional methods, village style bread, pancake variations, Kemal Paşa dessert (sponge pastry rolls in syrup), semolina dessert, honey, olives and variations, jam variations and various kinds of cheese are other authentic local products.

Cultural landscape is of great importance since it includes both former and living customs of the inhabitants who settle on the landscape (UNESCO, 1998). One of the traditions that is still alive in the village is sailing on the lake for fishing as couples of different genders. These couples are generally formed as husband-wife, grandma-son or father in law-daughter in law. Hard duties such as rowing and anchoring are done by men while pulling the gill net or fixing it are done by women. Women who has learned fishery from family elders assume the lake as their fields. Friendly and sincere attitudes of the villagers are also of the other local characteristics. The traditional characteristics of the area should be preserved so that they can be transferred to the next generations.

The village is on the route of migrating birds. Storks visit Gölyazı every year in spring time in order to breed. It is possible to come across with plenty of storks and their nests on lamp posts and chimneys in the

village (Figure 10). This situation adds an extra authentic value to the region and stork festivals are held in the last week of May. These festivals enrich the social life in the village.



Figure 10. Storks in Gölyazı.

With all mentioned characteristics Gölyazı village also makes contributions to the fields of arts since it is mentioned in poems, legends and films.

ASSESSMENT AND CONCLUSIONS

Local characteristics which are either still alive or about to disappear should be recorded in order to be evaluated within the scope of cultural landscape and to be transferred to next generations. As a result of this study, which has started out considering the mentioned necessity, local identity components of Gölyazı village have been determined and listed below:

- The study area is a natural environment including a lake and its shore.
- Uluabat Lake in the area is included in the Living Lakes Network, which includes world-famous 19 lakes.
- Uluabat Lake was acknowledged as Ramsar Site by the ministry of environment of Turkish Republic.
- Uluabat Lake is under preservation with its first degree natural protected area status.
- Uluabat Lake is rich in flora and fauna and hosts a kind of wildlife with special qualities.
- Endemic and globally endangered creatures live in Uluabat Lake.
- 11 islands and reefs exist in Uluabat Lake.
- Some of the islands are first degree natural protected areas whereas some are first degree archeologically protected areas.
- Gölyazı Village provides a dynamic landscape by transforming into an island and a peninsula depending on seasonal changes.
- Gölyazı Village is a member of Association of Historical Towns with its settlement patterns and authentic elements.
- Island part of the village is first degree archaeological protected area.
- Gölyazı Village possesses historical structures renovation of which haven't been completed yet and the renovation of which are to be started.
- Archaeological sites excavation of which haven't been started yet exist in Gölyazı.
- Separate historical structures such as a church, a windmill, an aqueduct, fortress ruins, a mosque, a public bath, a theatre, a temple and ancient city walls exist within the borders of the village.
- There is a monumental tree (the weeping plane tree) which was recorded to be 725 years old in 1998 at the village centre.
- The village has streets that form the cultural memory of the village. The streets host structures and lives that carry the traces of past to present day and keep the neighbourhood traditions alive through which one feels himself /herself safe
- Mythological stories about the initial settlement in the village and the sad story of the weeping plane tree are local and fascinating myths that belong to the area.
- The village is a kind of rural settlement where fishery is an important source of living.
- Female fisher tradition is a unique one to the area.

- The village has a population with friendly and sincere attitudes and it provides the Stork Festival and authentic eating and drinking opportunities.

It is clear that, Gölyazı Village has various local elements that bear high lexical, perceptible and representative values. In this case, this area is required to be preserved in national and international arena. Local identity values are parts of cultural landscape as they are the witnesses of the past and they are decisive factors in creating images for recognition.in both national and international arena. Cultural landscapes that have been maintained in accordance with local characteristics, enhance the awareness rate; create a collaboration environment in terms of recognising one's own country and making the country widely known and reinforces the sense of belonging and possession.

Gölyazı Village is an authentic area which is included in cultural landscape as it bares the witnesses of past and forms a collective memory between the past and the present. The area is different from the nearby villages considering its natural and cultural characteristics and thus it represent its local identity. It should be kept in mind that instead of considering them as a means of economic benefit, natural and cultural resources, which are essential for living with identity, should be preserved and be kept alive.

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