

A Comparative Study of Urban Cultural Landscape

Assist. Prof. Dr. Arif KECELI

Mehmet Akif Ersoy University, Department of Geography, Burdur, Turkey

E-mail: keceli@mehmetakif.edu.tr

Assist. Prof. Dr. Sinan KOCAMAN*

Agri Ibrahim Cecen University, Social Science Teaching Department, Ağrı, Turkey

E-mail: skocaman@agri.edu.tr

*Corresponding author

DOI: 10.6007/IJARBSS/v4-i6/972 URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v4-i6/972>

Abstract

This study is aiming to understand differences between approaches, organizations and applications of urban cultural landscape in different places. As a comparative study, this article is focusing on the American and Turkish urban cultural landscape features and patterns. In this paper, it was examined how Schein focuses on cultural landscape in his study area, Ashland Park, Kentucky. It is also attempting to find out how Schein incorporates historical and social development of Ashland Park, as a unique neighborhood, with its urban cultural landscape? Characteristics of urban cultural landscape, its developing stages and approaches were given in the study as selected genealogy of landscape. After the part of Schein's interpretations about insurance mapping, zoning, historical preservation and neighborhood associations related to cultural landscape, comparisons between American and Turkish urban cultural landscapes, built and preservation processes in both of those countries were discussed through examples from different part of Turkey.

Key Words: Urban Geography, Urban Cultural Landscape, Ashland Park, Schein, Turkey

INTRODUCTION

Schein's article focuses on landscape, especially trying to understand it within urban and cultural contexts. He has examined Ashland Park in Kentucky for his study in cultural landscape discourse. This area is an old suburban area and there are some historical heritages. So, this area is under protection by some civil associations and local management. One of the other reasons Schein has chosen this area is that he used to live there. So, he knows the importance of place, sensitiveness of the people about their environment and the methods or applications to protect this neighborhood as original. He explains the environment very well, and adds to historical activities and experiences of people in the area. Everyday experiences of individuals directly affects to the landscape and help researchers to interpret the landscape of a place. Actually, landscape is one of the important key concepts of Geography, although Schein just emphasizes that it is an important context for North American cultural geography (Schein, 1997). In this century, landscapes of the places have been rapidly and dramatically changing by

the effect of globalization, especially during the last 20 years. People have been trying to preserve their cultural and historical values while their interaction is rising with other parts of the world and societies by the effects of globalization. Cultural features, such as languages, religions and traditions, play important roles on developing processes of societies. If more than one different social community (nation) is located in close proximity, they are going to have some similarity in time. Even though communities and places have many similarities, they still have many differences and uniqueness. Landscape, especially “cultural landscape”, is one of those important footprint of unique identity of all places and communities.

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Schein has an effective and brief summary about landscape, it's developing and handling by academic studies. There schools and scholars which stands on cultural landscape theories, approaches and discussions. Landscape was a topic which used to be expressed with cultural and human made environment; it means it was a part of everyday life (Schein, 1997). Most of the authors, (e.g. Cosgrove, Duncan, Daniels, etc.) agree that landscape is a kind of symbolic representation of culture, gender, social class, economic and political views. Cosgrove stated that landscape is indeed the view of the outsider, a term of order and control, whether that control is technical, political or intellectual (Cosgrove, 1985). People use some natural feature (physical environment) and create their colors, architectures, house types and city plans. According to Harrison's simple explanation, landscape is totally of surface forms (Harrison, 1999). However, it is not just by environmental condition but also some text metaphors and parts of discourses, according to Duncan's opinions. Duncan thinks that it depends on the point of view to place of the one who sees and construes that landscape (Duncan, 1990). If landscape is a kind of representation of point of view, it can formed in any way which people can imagine and drive it into their way. For example, most of the American action movies end by a penetrative speech of the president to encourage people about the topic of movie, or like a speech of conquest (Schein, 1997). There are always some key words, like power, success, unity of the nation and invincibility. It may be considered as a kind of text or verbal landscape because when most of the people hear that speech, they recognize its purposes by emphasis and visual conditions even if they do not understand what he says.

Karl O. Saurer was the first scholar who claims and asserts cultural landscape as a product of human activity, in the 1920's. Since then, it constituted the main concern of what became to be known later, Berkeley School. After the 1920's and 1930's, although not a common theme in the rest of the world, landscape occupied a very important place in the work of many American geographers (Ari, 2005). The expression that *“Culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape is the result”* is one of the best explanations of Saurer to support his idea about formation of cultural landscape (Schein, 1997; Kayserili, 2010). This early definition has missed the interactions and dynamic part of progress and construction stages of landscape. However, Harrison mentioned that there is no absolute result for formation of physical or cultural landscape (Harrison, 1999). When we look at close history of the discipline, we see the humanistic geographer's post empiricist approaches to cultural landscape. Also, Cosgrove's challenge supported them. He asserted that a “cultural concept like landscape does not emerge unprompted from the minds of individuals or human groups”, in his study about symbolic landscape and its effects on social formation (Schein, 1997). There is no doubt to

accept this idea, especially when we think about human made environment and its landscape. There should be some conscious ideas, behaviors and acts which create human made landscape. Cultural landscape has relation with every single step or point of community. So, it is impossible to think that cultural landscape emerges itself, without any experience and impact of individuals or groups of people. There is another approach claims that cultural landscape cannot be a “final product” of human experience (Schein, 1997). It must be more than that, because there should be some other interactions and relations which should play role on formation of landscape. Cresswell’s approach is that culture emphasis to its necessity in a social order is communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored (Cresswell, 2003). Also, the time is such an indispensable actor of this formation process of landscape.

Space, place and scale are the most important academic topics handled with landscape. Cultural landscape and its formation are always open to different interpretations, although it has many specialty and objectivity. That is explaining by spatial and visual components of cultural landscape (Schein, 1997). Schein states that cultural landscape may change during time by the effects of social and cultural life, like space (Schein, 1997). For example, early cowboy movies’ symbolic landscape was a small town which includes saloons, sheriff office, hotel, and a few houses around in a desert area; while most of the cowboy movies during the 1980s have postmodern cowboy farms on a big green field with lots of horses and cows, and stories changes from war with Indians or a group of thieves to a cowboy’s family life or daily life. There is another example from Anatolian city. There were some public fountains in Istanbul (almost 20 of them are still remaining). They are located in the middle of public squares and those areas are used to be for public meetings, traditional celebrations and bazaars. It has been changed after establishment of the Republic and most of the squares of the cities were built around some symbolic statues of Ataturk or a scene from the war of independence of Turkey (figure 1).



Figure 1. One of the Ottoman’s public fountains (Uskudar Fountain and Uskudar Square) on left, and Taksim Square and a statue on right

Schein alleges that if the landscape may change during the time by formulation of public places, it should ask how cultural landscape related and connected to its own place and to other places. While individuals or communities improve their social facilities and social structures (cultural, economic, political), they also improve their traditional social features. They are

moving around the world and they carry their own features to places where they go. For example, two fold houses are very common in rural areas of the West Black Sea Region of Turkey. First floor is usually empty place and generally used as a small barn for a few animals. Some people use this place to stock their product. As you guess, second floor is a regular house which people go up to by stairs outside of the house. People, who move to Istanbul (which is one of the biggest metropolitan cities of the world) from this region, build their own house with the same style but there is no animal or agricultural product to stock in there. They use this place as a garage for their car or stock their home stuff.

Scale is another important indicator to understand and interpret the formation of place. However, (cultural) landscape cannot be observed or interpreted by a single scale of space, place or time. According to Massey's opinion places "can be imagined as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings" (Schein, 1997). I think it is same for cultural landscape, if it is accepted that cultural landscape is interconnected to place. There would be a difference between interpretations of observers of landscape according to their distance (scale) to object (Cresswell, 2003).

There is a general agreement that "interests directly effect to perceptions". When we look at the landscape context, we can see one of the best examples for this proven theory. If ten different people look at the same scene, they all have different interpretations and perceptions about the landscape of that place (Schein, 1997). Although every landscape has such specific historical, cultural or natural features in it, people interpret them by some spatial and temporal network with their experiences and knowledge. In other words, descriptions of the things form by who describes it (Duncan, 1990).

ASHLAND PARK AND BACKGROUND OF ITS CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Ashland Park in Kentucky was chosen by the author for two reasons. First, he lived there. So, he knows the importance of place, sensitivity of the people about their environment and the methods or applications to protect this neighborhood as original. Second, this area is such an old suburban area and there are some historical heritages. The symbolic landscape of the neighborhood of this place is representing "part of the iconography of nationhood, part of the shared set of ideas and memories and feelings which bind people together" (Schein, 1997).

Actually, he has chosen a place where he already familiar and has some experience up there. There was an old town house of Henry Clay who lived here from 1809 until his death. It was a great farm with livestock, tobacco and grain fields. At that time, he invited travelers to visit his land. After his death, his son bought the house from his heirs. The house was in bad condition at that time, so, he tore down the house and built a second house by following as much possible as original plan. During the Civil War, he moved to Canada and sold the house to Kentucky University. The house changed several owners after this time. Finally, Nannette McDowell Bullock who was a granddaughter of Henry Clay gave the house to Henry Clay Memorial Foundation to be used as a museum and the first floor of the house was opened to public in 1950. This second house was rebuilt and repaired after archeological excavations in 1990. Now, the house is registered as a National Historic Landmark (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Location Map of Henry Clay's House in Ashland, Kentucky.

The Ashland Park Historic District was planned by the famed Olmsted on 600 acres. However, ninety-five acres of this area is called as Ashland Park at present time (Schein, 1997). They designed that area with lots of trees, green fields, and different kinds of house types, like Colonial Revival, Craftsman, Bungalow, Tudor Revival, Dutch Colonial Revival, Prairie, Georgian Revival, Spanish Eclectic, French Eclectic, and Italian Renaissance (National Park Service, 2012). Now, the original plan of the neighborhood still remains by care of residents, official departments and some civil associations. The population of the city was 21,981 according to 2000 Census. When we look at the Census result from 1870 to 2000, there is a regular increasing at around 2000 people per decade but there was a strange increasing from 1910 to 1930; 1910: 8,688; 1920: 14,729; 1930: 29,074 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). This date was the period of constructing of Ashland by Olmsted, and most probably people started to come and settle in this area during this time. By the way, 1930's population is higher than 2000's population which is remarkable situation for the city.

Nowadays, you can see the cultural landscape in that area very clearly. It took such a long time and effort to create it there. As Schein emphasizes there were more than 5000 American projects done by that firm between 1857 and 1950 (Schein, 1997). So, Olmsted Company was a really professional firm. They used their experience about landscape and suburban residential design while they were working on Ashland Park. Also, they took ideas from local agencies and local client. Firm managers paid attention their expectations and recommendations. That was one of the important reasons to get excellent success from this project, in Schein's opinion. I strongly agree with that because this is one of the city and regional planning principles that decision makers should know about what people want around their residents, what do they need and what do they expect. Since every single community has some special feature and daily life style, planners are supposed to care about those specific expectations.

HOW SCHEIN INTERPRET LANDSCAPE OF ASHLAND PARK?

Schein mentions about the role of historical importance and characteristics, Olmsted's effort and local expectations on Ashland Park formation before he explains his view by interestingly using insurance mapping, zoning, historic preservation and neighborhood associations. Fire mapping has been used in America since the eighteenth century to represent potential fire risk for the commercial, residential and industrial area/building (Schein, 1997).

It is reality that, physical geography, vegetation, climate and building materials have played role on it. There should be more woody stuff around and woody houses, etc. Insurances emerge by needs and happening which occurs very often and people want to preserve themselves and their properties. It changes from region to another. Although the insurance industry emerged almost 20 years ago and it is still at the developing stage in Turkey, the common insurance types for untransportable properties (houses, fabric, etc) is earthquake insurance. Since there are 4-5 long and active fault line along Anatolian part of Turkey, lots of earthquakes happened during history and they are still continuing. So, earthquake maps help individuals and companies to choose place to build or give them an idea when they want to hire or buy some property. It just works similar as it is in US, according to Schein's explanations about insurance map's usage in US (Schein, 1997).

Sanborn Company was the most famous and dominated firm which did fire insurance mapping in US during the Ashland Park design process. They prepared a well detailed report about place where they were worked on it. Their maps were large scale, colorful apparent, included material's types per building and all other information for insurance underwritings. That is why the map of this company has been used for a long time. Those all played very effective roles on formation process of Ashland Park. Those maps included all the previous spatial data and information on it. Also, they have done some to codify, concretize and naturalize to spatial features of the area (Schein, 1997). So, the map also helped to construct social world. Additionally, map was useful for market analysis, various governmental agencies, utility companies, banks, mortgage companies, and life insurance companies. Company has recorded to what, where and when they built around the Ashland Park area. They have some requirements for the property owners who get fire insurance like smoke detectors, deadbolt door and fire extinguisher. They also monitor these facilities. They update their data periodically and they have recordings of changes on individual houses.

So, there is a cultural landscape by pressure of these fire insurance's requirements and monitor of company. While residents care about their own properties and apply requirements on to them, they create something similar around their neighborhood unconsciously. Residents are not required to build or renew their property in the same style but since their building materials are under control and it affects insurance cost which they are going to pay, they follow some similar way to do those restorations. It is such an interesting way to interpret cultural landscape, but indeed it is really embedded in the article's context by author. Although I never think about any relationship between insurance mapping (related applications) and cultural landscape, I see that most places must have this kind of feature on its cultural landscape.

Schein also explained how zoning progress has been handled by officers for Ashland Park. Actually, zoning part of Schein's article is not really clear because he described how zoning discipline formed, how people get benefit from zoning studies, how it works, who does it and what people have done in US about zoning. We expected to see, more information about how officers designed zoning for several purposes to make Lexington better, especially Ashland Park environment.

During the zoning process, real estate agents, developers, builders, architects, civic club representatives and some citizens have played roles and shared their ideas with zoning commission (Schein, 1997). At the end of the process, official zoning of Lexington was prepared by Planning and Zoning Commission and consultant Segoe in the summer of 1930. Since there

were so many members from different places and disciplines, zoning of Lexington did not occurred in a really cultural (natural) way. Those who came from New York, Cincinnati, Louisville and St. Louis brought their ideas and experience to the table (Schein, 1997). Although Lexington has zoning which contribute of different ideas (let say different daily life cultures effect), it was going to have a sample city planning for lots of American cities.

Lexington Zoning Ordinance dictated what people could or could not do on their own land (Schein, 1997). According to zoning regularity and people preference, existing cultural and historic visual condition of Lexington and Ashland Park is preserved and remain orderly and harmonious. Although general zoning regularities were formed by different aspects to landscape and suburban planning, once they built up and maintained same condition, it was perceived as the originally cultural form of that neighborhood.

It is laudable to keep environment and special buildings as the original by different governmental departments and civic institutions in US. Actually, it is similar in other countries throughout the world. Every country needs to keep and maintain to their historical values. However, it is more serious in US, since there are few historical places there, people have been trying to create some sample to give them and their generation some sense which binds them to past.

There are five kinds of nationally recognized house types, and 505 residential buildings in Ashland Park were built in one of those styles (Schein, 1997). Also, Henry Clay's house is still remaining in that neighborhood as a cultural landmark. People respect their own cultural landscape and Clay's house. Residents are paying attention to keep all the environmental stuff as they are. Although Henry Clay's house has been used for different purposes by different people and institutions, it is a museum and represents his life as well (Figure 3). However, that may be criticise that there is nothing about slaves who worked there at that time, although he had almost 60 slaves at once (Eaton, 1957) which is a great number for a single house or farm. Exceptionally, there are some written records about them and what they have done on that land (Schein, 1997).



Figure 3. Some Scenes from Henry Clay's House (Dining room, drawing room and bedroom).

CONCLUSION: COMPARATIVE DISCUSSION OF AMERICAN AND TURKISH CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Comparison of cultural landscape of this area with some historical districts in Turkey are placed here for the purpose of further understanding of the topic with its reflections in different

geographies. The districts mentioned above were registered to local associations of historical heritages, Ministry of Culture and Tourism and other responsible governmental departments and UNESCO World Heritages List. There are some similarities between most of these historical districts and Ashland Park area, according to Schein's titles (insurance mapping, zoning, and historical preservation and neighborhood associations). Three of the many historical districts of Turkey were chosen for comparison, which were really old and in the list of World Heritages of UNESCO. Those are Safranbolu District (exist in the list), Mardin Rocky Houses (in the tentative list) and Cumalikizik Village (in the tentative list) (Figure 4).

From the 13th century to the advent of the railway in the early 20th century, Safranbolu was an important caravan station on the main East–West trade route. The Old Mosque, Old Bath and Suleyman Pasha Madrasah were built in 1322. During its apogee in the 17th century, Safranbolu's architecture influenced urban development throughout much of the Ottoman Empire (Unesco, 2013a). Today, there are 20 different neighborhoods officially were established and most of them named after great Ottoman Sultan's and historical buildings which exist up there. Rock, adobe, kiln and wood are common building materials all along the district. Social structure of the area is still quite similar to its past. Agriculture and livestock are still important economic activities. Depending on their products, leather and weaving are still remaining. Additionally and naturally, tourism industry plays important role around the area. There are lots of historic religious, educational and social buildings in Safranbolu and all of those are open to the public today (Ozdemir, 2011).

Mardin is a city in a rocky region in southeastern Anatolia. The city is mainly medieval in origin and is situated on the slopes of a rocky hill, crowned by fortress built on its citadel. This barren stony region around Diyarbakir and Mardin stretches as far as Sanliurfa and Gaziantep. The city as a whole with its traditional stone, religious and vernacular architecture and its terraced urban pattern is the best preserved example of Anatolian soil. Deyrulzafaran Monastery is one of the living religious centers of Syriandacobites in Mardin, an impressive architectural complex in the Mesopotamian plain (Unesco, 2013b). Some of the Mardin houses were carving built by to existing rocky place while some of the others were build by using yellow limestones, adobe and clay mortar as a splicer. Characteristic tall walls work for both separating internal home from street and preserving inside from cold climate and wind. Most of the houses have courtyard. The area was declared as a Historical Residential Preservation area in 1974 (Günel, 2005).

Bursa was founded in 200 BC by King Prusia of Bitinia and was ruled by the Roman and Byzantium Empires for centuries. The main importance of the city is that it became the first political centre of the Ottomans. There are 127 mosques, 45 tombs, 34 madrasahs, 25 inns, 37 public bath houses, 14 public kitchens and dervish lodges constructed during the first 6 sultans of Ottomans. Cumalikizik located on the northern skirts of Uludag was established to provide logistic support just before Conquer of Bursa. It has preserved not only its historical texture but the traditional lifestyle up to this date as well. It became a district of Bursa in time (Unesco, 2013b). Cumalikizik still looks like an Ottoman village with house types, streets and lifestyles. It still smells like Ottoman with its adobe and woody houses, rocky and tight streets and horse whinnying (Ozturk and Cahantimur, 2010).

There are lots of legal composition and application to preserve and maintain this kind of historical residential areas in Turkey. Since they are really old, there was no insurance mapping

for those areas but nowadays lots of insurance companies care about buildings to protect them from fire and earthquakes. Also there are some special construction firms who work on restoration of the building. They have special permission from government. It means that not every single construction firm can handle to rebuild or restore that building. Also, there are special zoning for that area to keep those neighborhoods as original by types of houses and streets. For example in Cumalikizik which is an old Ottoman village, there are no roads which are paved with asphalt, they still use old rocky roads and owner of the houses cannot add room or terrace or destroy any part of the house without professional project which prepared by governmental planners. Besides them, there are lots of civil associations and foundations to care about those areas.

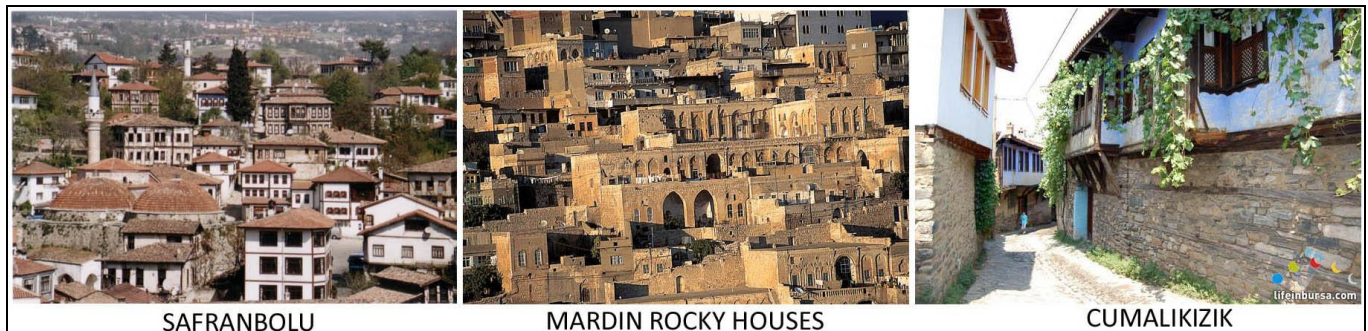


Figure 4. Sample Scenes from some of the Historical Heritages of Turkey.

All of those exist for preserving those historical values and bringing them today to represent daily practices of people who lived in the same place. That is really similar to what people have done for Ashland Park. However, the difference is that Ashland Park and its environment was built around a historic house consciously and by some professional process. Whereas the places where it mentioned about in Turkey were completely constructed in history, they remained until today and now they are under preservation by local people and official departments.

REFERENCES

- Ari, Y., (2005). Landscape in American Cultural Geography, *Eastern Geographical Review*, Vol: 13, pp. 311-340.
- Cosgrove, D., (1985). *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, Barnes & Noble Books, pp. 1-70.
- Cresswell, T., (2003). Landscape and the Obliteration of Practice, in *Handbook of Cultural Geography*, K. Anderson, M. Domosh, S. Pile and N. Thrift. London, Sage, pp. 269-81.
- Duncan, J. S., (1990). Landscape as a Signifying System, Chapter 1 of *The City as Text: The Politics of Landscape Interpretation in the Kandyan Kingdom*, New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 11-24.
- Eaton, C., (1957). *Henry Clay and the Art of American Politics*, MA: Little, Boston, Brown and Company, pp. 12.
- Günel, V., (2005). The Cultural Tourism Potential of Mardin Province, *Marmara Geographical Review*, Vol: 11, pp. 93-124.
- Harrison, S., (1999). The Problem with Landscape: Some philosophical and practical questions, *Geography*, Vol: 84, No: 365, pp. 355-363.

- Kayserili, A., (2010). Carl Ortwin Sauer and Cultural Geography, Vol: 24, pp. 177-190.
- National Park Service, (2012). Ashland Park District. <http://www.nps.gov/nr//travel/lexington/aph.htm>, last accessed 6 March 2013.
- Ozdemir, U., (2011). Safranbolu's Cultural Heritage Resources and Their Protection, Eastern Geographical Review, Vol: 26, pp. 129-143.
- Ozturk, B. R., Cahantimur , I. A., (2010). Valuation of Traditional Turkish Wooden Building Culture in Term of Ecological and Socio-cultural Sustainability, Case Study Cumalikizik/Bursa, World Applied Sciences Journal Vol: 10, No: 4, pp. 466-471.
- Schein, H. R., (1997). The Place of Landscape: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting an American Scene, Annals of the Association of American Geographers, pp. 660-680.
- U.S. Census Bureau, (2012). Population Statistic of Ashland City, Kentucky, <http://www.census.gov/> last accessed 6 March 2013.
- Unesco, (2013a), City of Safranbolu, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/614> last accessed 6 March 2013.
- Unesco, (2013b), Mardin Cultural Landscape, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1406/> last accessed 6 March 2013.
- Unesco, (2013c), Bursa and Cumalikizik Early Ottoman urban and rural settlements, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1407/> last accessed 6 March 2013.