

Rural Cultural Landscapes in the Mediterranean Geography: A Study in Antalya, Turkey

Akdeniz coğrafyasında kırsal kültürel peyzajlar: Antalya'da bir araştırma

Meryem Atik^{*1}, Veli Ortaçesme¹, Emrah Yıldırım¹

¹Akdeniz University Faculty of Architecture Department of Landscape Architecture, 07070 Antalya, Turkey

Abstract: Culture is defined as complete values and knowledge inherited. Cultural landscapes on the other hand embrace a diversity of manifestations of the interaction between humanbeing and its natural environment. Manifestation of human culture brings different characters to landscape where rural cultural landscapes are characterized by human activities blended with nature, low building density, traditional land use models, local architecture and other vernacular elements and also valuable wildlife, flora and habitat features. The Turkish Mediterranean has been inhabited and cultured since the ancient times. Being a unique location for human settlement and production of various commodities. The aim of this study is evaluate rural cultural landscapes in Antalya with regard to different forms of shift from nature to culture and analyse their heritage value in the context of a Mediterranean geography.

Keywords: Landscape, rural landscape, Mediterranean geography, Antalya

Öz: Kültür bize miras bırakılmış değerler ve bilgiler bütünüdür. Diğer yandan kültürel peyzajlar, insanoğlu ve doğal çevre arasındaki karşılıklı ilişkiler bütünü içinde barındırmaktadır. İnsan kültürü peyzaja farklı karakterler kazandırır. Kırsal kültürel peyzajlar, insan faaliyetlerinin doğa ile harmanlandığı, yapı yoğunluğu az, geleneksel alan kullanım modellerini içeren, yerel mimari ve yöreye özgü diğer yapıların olduğu, flora ve faunası ile önemli yaşam alanlarına sahip olan alanlardır. Türkiye'nin Akdeniz Bölgesi antik zamanlar beri insan topluluklarınca yaşam alanı olarak tercih edilmiş ve burada çeşitli kültürler gelişmiştir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Akdeniz coğrafyasında yer alan Antalya'da doğanın kültüre nasıl dönüştüğünü ortaya koymak ve kırsal kültürel peyzajların miras değerini değerlendirmektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Peyzaj, kırsal peyzaj, Akdeniz coğrafyası, Antalya

1. Introduction

Culture is defined as complete values and knowledge inherited. The word is derived from the Latin 'colere' which means to care, cultivate, tillage or honour (Naveh, 1995; Atik et al., 2010). Created by man, culture is apparent with human product and imprint in the landscape. In this sense process of shifting nature to culture add values, experiences, knowledge and new scenery to the land, which eventually becomes cultural. and rural cultural landscapes reveal how humanbeing transformed nature into a cultural product for their basic human needs.

In this sense process of shifting nature to culture adds to values, experiences, knowledge and new scenery to the natural landscape which eventually becomes cultural. Jackson (1984) explained that culture implies a way of life ruled by traditions and customs, entirely remote from the larger world of politics and

* İletişim yazarı: Meryem Atik, e-posta: meryematik@akdeniz.edu.tr

law: a way of life where identity derived not from permanent possession of land but from membership in a group or a super-family.

Landscape is by definition an area as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors (Council of Europe, 2000). To understand overall landscape it is important to evaluate what are the characters that exist in the landscape. Here landscape character is a combination of qualities or features that distinguishes one landscape from another (Swanwick 2002; Heritage Council 2006).

Landscape character is often based on the landscape attributes that give landscape an identity and sense of place (Fry et al., 2009) and displays different uniqueness to that place (Atik et al., 2016). Balestrieri (2015) confirmed that every landscape has its own character that is the result of the form of the land, the quality of the soil and vegetation, the way the land is used, the pattern of human settlement and so on.

Cultural landscapes on the other hand are illustrative results of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal (WHC, 1992). They often embrace a diversity of manifestations of the interaction between humankind and its natural environment. Manifestation of human culture brings different characters to the landscape where rural cultural landscapes represent special relations in which nature has been shifted for basic human needs but strongly interpreted by culture in a natural environment.

Rural is used as an adjective that relating to characteristics of the country and associated with farming. Rural cultural landscapes are characterized by human activities blended with nature, low building density, traditional land use models, local architecture and other vernacular elements and also valuable wildlife, flora and habitat features. Cullotta and Barbera (2011) identified rural landscapes as traditional cultural landscapes.

The Turkish Mediterranean has been inhabited under the influence of different cultures since the ancient times which brought a diversity to its landscapes. Being a unique location for the human settlement and production of various commodities, Antalya region reveals a great variety of rural landscapes and evidences of rich rural characters. The aim of this study is evaluate rural cultural landscapes in Antalya with regard to different forms of shift from nature to culture and analyse their heritage value in the context of a Mediterranean geography.

2. Material and Methods

Antalya region was chosen as the study area. Situated on the south western coast of Turkish Mediterranean (Figure 1), Antalya shows high diversity in topography, climate and vegetation. Coastal landscapes on sea level rise up and become mountain and plateau landscapes at 2500 meters and above. Characterized typically by Mediterranean evergreen vegetation of macchia and Turkish Pine Forest (*Pinus brutia*) up to 800-1000 meters, vegetation turns into mainly Cedar (*Cedrus libani*) and mixed forest up to 2500-3000 meters.

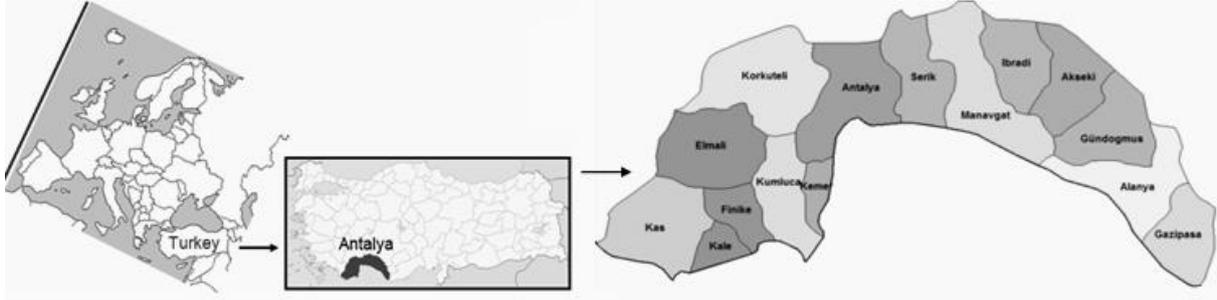


Figure 1. Location of study site

Rural cultural landscapes of Antalya Region were chosen as the material of the study. Having different crop patterns and locating at different elevations and topography, rural landscapes were considered as a mosaic of rural settlements, traditional land models, mountains, valleys, forests, rivers and other surrounding natural characteristics.

Method of the study is based on analysing heritage value of rural landscapes according to cultural interface model. The term ‘interface’ refers to relationships or associations between two characteristics or features of a landscape (Atik et al., 2013). Interpreting interfaces in rural landscape is a valuable tool for comprehending how cultural layers in the landscape that come through time along with processes and products continue to affect each other (Table 2).

Table 1. Cultural interfaces of landscapes

<i>Interfaces</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Heritage Value</i>
<i>Between past and present</i>	Interface between past and present brings time depth to the cultural landscape	Traditions, values
<i>Between man and nature</i>	Interface between man and nature explains type of product and process of the landscape	Local vernacular buildings
<i>Between culture and space</i>	Interface between culture and space reflects the cultural identity and individuality of the landscape in a particular place	Field patterns, vernacular elements
<i>Between spirituality and visibility</i>	Interface between spirituality and visibility reflects the effect of belief and perception on the visual character of the landscape	Cultural values

Source: adapted from Palang and Fry, 2003; PECSRL, 2006 and Atik et al., 2013

3. Findings

Rural landscape is a geographical area that historically been used by people, or shaped or modified by human activity, occupancy or intervention and that possesses a significant concentration, linkage or continuity of areas of land use, vegetation, buildings and structures, roads and waterway and natural features (NPS, 2014).

3.1. Coastal Banana Plantations in Gazipaşa and Alanya

Although the origin of banana (*Musa sp.*) goes to Southeast Asia, microclimate of east Antalya Region offers good growing environment for the crop. Banana was first introduced in Turkey by the 18th century, but cultivars of Banana have been commercially produced in Alanya and Gazipaşa since 1930s.

Banana plantations display a kind of mosaic with citrus growing fields, fruit gardens and houses. Rural settlements are scattered around the gardens and fields. There are two forms of Banana plantation; one is large Banana gardens on coastal plains and flat lands; second is the Banana plantations fixed on the elevated topography by terraces. Banana terraced plantation is typical landscape pattern that unique to this locality.

3.2. Rural Settlements and Agricultural Fields on Coastal Plains

Coastal plains are flat, low lying lands that created by the accumulation of sediments of the rivers. Depends of the size, form and location of the coast, coastal plains offer great opportunities for local people and economies. Coastal plain rural settlements indicate coastal plains and flatlands that found on lands formed by small and big running surface waters, creeks and brooks.

Because Antalya is rather characterized by mountainous land forms and great majority of the coastal Antalya is dedicated to tourism developments, coastal settlements with rural characters are significant landscape types for the region. Coastal rural settlements are typically nested with gardens, fields, green houses, dwellings and natural patches and corridors both on the east and west costs of Antalya.

3.3. Mountain Rural Settlements and Agricultural Lands

Mountains are large and often elevated land forms that stretching above the surrounding. They perceived and regarded difficult and inaccessible but also romantised by their clean air and natural beauty. As a geographic product mountains are enriched by rivers, valleys but at the same time tend to be less suitable for agriculture and housing.

Some of the rural settlements locate on the back of the mountains due to inaccessibility of the land rigorously limited by the ridges and deep valleys. Open field in between forest are used for agriculture and stock farming. Most of the mountainous rural settlements are surrounded by terraced topography.

3.4. Agricultural Fields on River Valleys

Valleys are wide open corridors often having running water along the bottom. They elongate an open land considerably low between mountains. Because they are either irrigated and/or drained by a river, it is possible to use valley bottoms for different purposes. Depending on the form of valleys geographically, open flat earth composed well drained accumulated sediments provide preferable media for agricultural activities.

Agricultural fields on valleys are typically found on the western coast and inland rivers in Antalya Region. Open fields on both sides of Demre River are used as a ground for green houses, citrus plantations and fruit gardens.

3.5. Ancient and Late Time Agricultural Terraces

Terrace is a raised bank of earth bordered by either native vegetation or large stones. It has been a genuine solution to work on the vertical or sloping earth and transfer steep land into a media of farming and cultivation.

Agricultural terraces of ancient and late time are outstanding example of local knowledge and living heritage in the landscape. Selge in Manavgat Province has been holding the oldest example of agricultural terraces in Antalya Region. Foundation of Selge dates back to 1200 BC. Selge was built on a fertile mountain basin enclosed by the mountain peaks above 1000 meters. Strabon confirmed that the city was built by Khalkas of Spartans or Lakedaimonians. Basic commodity of Selge was agriculture and oil, wine, timber, medicinal plants and plants for spiritual ceremonies were main crops grown in a large fields and forests (Strabon, 2005).

3.6. Agricultural Lands on Plateaus and High Mountain Flatlands

Plateaus are also called as high mountain plains that consist of relatively flat land on high mountains but often divided into sections or part by either small or big rivers or valleys. They are relatively and homogeneously flat than plains depend of their geology and location.

Most of the plateaus witness the old agro-pastoral system of the movement of livestock, goats, sheep and camels of local Yörüks. They have the evidences of former land use and lifestyle on the landscape regarding to vegetation, patterns and vernacular elements and significance of the natural environment.

4. Result

Landscape can be like a book, one tells us who we are and how we arrived at this place that we call modern world that it can tell us about human origins and history and social progress (Fairclough et al., 2002). Rural landscapes act as a buffer between urban and nature, land use, boundary space that includes not only land use but also infrastructure, value and interest having natural social, cultural and environmental functions. They are the living examples of evolutionary process between man and nature.

Rural landscapes area rather countryside that offer resource and place for farming activities with low density housing surrounded by natural environment. They are a kind of very dynamic intersection between cities and towns and natural areas.

Rural characteristics of rural cultural landscapes and their interfaces were discussed in this study. Balestrier (2015) articulated that the rural landscape is nothing more than a visual manifestation of the type of existing agriculture. Rural landscapes in Antalya Region were mainly shaped mainly by agricultural activities. In some districts rural landscapes have become transition zones where demands between traditional rural life and urban expansion compete. However, topography and mountainous land forms were also main natural features that influence the patterns and individuality in rural landscapes.

Rural landscapes are more than what people produce in but how people use, live and shape the landscape. Gradual cultural evolvment in rural landscape comes with the needs of life and survival that most mediated in rural landscapes (Figure 2). Shelter, production of food and basic commodities were major reasons that people elaborated the nature with tangible and intangible values.

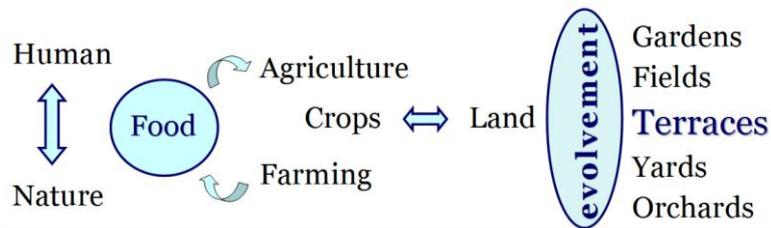


Figure 2. Gradual cultural evolvment of rural landscapes

The power and the creativity of the culture created purposefully by people identify the individuality of the cultural landscape (Atik, et al., 2013). A strong connectivity and persistence among different characteristics of rural landscapes can be found in spatial, temporal, spiritual and cultural terms. Knowledge and experiences and unique land use patterns have become source of heritage via spatial, temporal and cultural connectivity (Table 2). We can conclude that characteristics of rural landscapes in Antalya Region diversify according to location, complexity of agriculture activities and surrounding natural environment. Both characteristics of rural landscape and interfaces offer a ground for communication how heritage values can be documented, interpreted and apprehended.

Table 2. Heritage value of rural landscapes in Antalya Region

<i>Interfaces</i>	<i>Heritage Value</i>
<i>Between past and present</i>	Time depth is exist in the traditional knowledge and experiences in rural landscapes. Agricultural terraces have been used with fallow system and the rotation decided by local communities. Interface lies in many vernacular elements of bee hives, granaries and also production patterns of local crops like Olive and Grain.
<i>Between man and nature</i>	Rural landscapes of Antalya Regions are almost results of the human occupation on the land which refined through processes and have become product of our modern day. Interface between man and nature has been actively running in many examples such as terraced ponds for irrigation, greenhouses that been seated on the terraces.
<i>Between culture and space</i>	Identity of rural landscapes strongly resides on the rurality of the environment and pastoral way of life. Individuality and diversity become more significant if such cultural practice has been carried out locally and traditionally. Pastoral grounds of Nomadic Yörüks on plateaus and high mountain plains are a kind of cultural testimony that found in rural landscapes.
<i>Between spirituality and visibility</i>	Historicity of rural landscapes in Antalya is defined by the historic elements and traditional land use pattern that historically unique and visibly apparent. Since its foundation in 150 BC, different cultures brought unique sense of place and spirituality that are largely found in rural landscapes with historic elements in and around.

Acknowledgements

This study was supported by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) with the project number 214O393.

References

- Atik, M., Danacı, H.M., Erdoğan, R. (201). Perception of Plants in Ancient Times and Their Use as Motifs Revealing Aspects of the Cultural Landscape in Side, Turkey. *Landscape Research*, 35 (3): 281-297.
- Atik, M., Bell, S., Erdoğan, R. (2013). Understanding Cultural Interfaces in the Landscape: a Case study of Ancient Lycia in the Turkish Mediterranean. *Landscape Research*, 38 (2): 222-242.
- Atik, M., Işıklı, R.C., Ortaçesme, V. (2016). Clusters of landscape characters as a way of communication in characterisation: A Study from Side, Turkey. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 182:385-396.
- Balestrieri, M. (2015). Theories and Methods of Rural Landscape Classification in Europe: The Italian Approach. *International Journal of Rural Management*, 11(2): 156–174.
- Council of Europe, (2000). *The European Landscape Convention* (STE n°176). Retrieved from – <http://www.coe.int> (Erişim tarihi: 25.04.2014).
- Cullotta, S. ve Barbera, G. (2011). Mapping traditional cultural landscapes in the Mediterranean area using a combined multidisciplinary approach: Method and application to Mount Etna (Sicily; Italy). *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 100 (1-2), 98-108.
- Fairclough, G., Rippon, S., Bull, D. (2002). *Europe's Cultural Landscape: Archaeologists ad the Management of Change*. In cooperation with Council of Europe, European Archaeologiae Consilium and English Heritage.
- Fry, G., Tveit, M.S., Ode, A., Velarde, M.D. (2009). The ecology of visual landscapes: exploring the conceptual common ground of visual and ecological landscape indicator. *Ecological Modeling*, 9: 933-947.
- Heritage Council, (2006). *Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) in Ireland: Baseline Audit and Evaluation*. Prepared by Julie Martin Associates in Association with Alison Farmer Associate, ISBN 978-1-906304-01-0, pp 78.

TÜCAUM 30. Yıl Uluslararası Coğrafya Sempozyumu
International Geography Symposium on the 30th Anniversary of TUCAUM
3-6 Ekim 2018 /3-6 October 2018, Ankara

Jackson, J.B. (1984). *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*. Yale University Press, New Haven, Connecticut.

Naveh, Z. (1995) Interactions of landscapes and cultures, *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 32, pp. 43–54.

NPS, (2014). *Characteristics of the Rural Landscape. National Register Bulletin*, Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historical Landscapes, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service.
http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb30/nrb30_5.htm Accessed 07.09.2104.

PECSRL, (2006). European rural future: Landscape as an interface, 22nd Conference of the Permanent European Conference for the Study of the Rural Landscape, 4–9 September, Berlin/Brandenburg, available at: http://www.geog.fu-berlin.de/*pecsrl/index.html (accessed in October 2009).

Palang, H., Fry, G. (2003). Landscape interfaces. In: Palang, H., Fry, G. (Eds.), *Landscape Interfaces. Cultural heritage in changing landscapes*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, pp 1–14.

Strabon, (2005). *Antik Anadolu coğrafyasi*, Trans. Pekman, A. Arkeoloji ve Sanat Yayınları, İstanbul.

Swanwick, C. (2002). *Landscape Character Assessment*. Guidance for England and Scotland. Cheltenham (UK); Edinburg: The Countryside Agency; Scottish National Heritage.

WHC, (1992). *Convention Concerning to Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*. WHC.92/CONF.002/12. Available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/sessions/16COM> (Accessed April 2010)