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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language choice among Albanian immigrant adolescents in Greece: The effect of the interlocutor’s generation</td>
<td>Aspasia Chatzidaki - Ioanna Xenikaki</td>
<td>4-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening skills development: The effect of the implementation of an ESAP module</td>
<td>Dora Chostelidou</td>
<td>17-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ekistics monumental heritage in today’s Turkey: current status and management prospects</td>
<td>Eleni G. Gavra</td>
<td>32-44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wider Benefits of adult participation in Lifelong Learning courses</td>
<td>Eugenia A. Panitsidou</td>
<td>45-52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The effectiveness of a pilot intervention program of Physical Education in Multicultural Preschool Education</td>
<td>Eva Pavlidou - Virginia Arvanitidou - Sofia Chatzigeorgiadou</td>
<td>53-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A comparison of the educational performance of students attending IPS and MPS on abilities crucial for school learning and adaptation</td>
<td>Georgios Nikolaou - Aikaterini T. Papadia</td>
<td>67-77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From another(‘s) view point – narrative approaches in special educational research</td>
<td>Lena Lang - Birgitta Lansheim - Lisbeth Ohlsson</td>
<td>78-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An attempt to modernise vocabulary teaching through the use of a user-oriented web-based learning management system</td>
<td>Maria Paradia</td>
<td>87-99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humor im unterricht: ansichten der lehrer</td>
<td>Nikos Chaniotakis</td>
<td>100-111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The development of pupils’ moral behavior through handbooks of “Morality” at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century in Greece</td>
<td>Roula Ziogou-Karastergiou - Efstratios Vacharoglou</td>
<td>112-129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The contribution of School Principal of Secondary Education in the induction of novice teachers in Greece</td>
<td>Sofia Kastanidou - Georgios Iordanidis</td>
<td>130-144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ekistics monumental heritage in today’s Turkey: current status and management prospects

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Abstract

Turkey, having historical links with ancient civilizations, has also to face many problems, under the influence of both natural and social factors, as regards the preservation of its historic environment. The country tried at first to develop legislation that regulates public intervention to protect primarily the urban architectural heritage, taking measures at national, regional and local level. The fundamental laws regarding the protection of cultural heritage coincide with periods of political and economic change, while the country, in the recent years, has started taking steps towards achieving a modern legal framework, concerning protection, commensurate with the European one. Nowadays, all activities concerning protection, planning, management and preservation of cultural and natural heritage, are carried out under the guidelines established by the Legislation about Conservation of Cultural and Natural Heritage and the Principles of the Supreme and Regional Councils of Conservation / Maintenance.

The country, today, is in transitional stage and the attempt to balance tradition and modernization leads to a cultural dualism, which is evident in all aspects of life and often associated with westernization and acceptance or rejection of Ottoman and Islamic elements. This paper targets to record and evaluate the institutional framework and policies on the management of cultural and architectural heritage in contemporary Turkey.

Keywords: Heritage, protection, management, institutional framework, Turkey

Elements of historical and cultural identity

The first period of Ottoman history is characterized by almost continuous territorial expansion, during which, the Ottoman Empire, beginning as a small hegemony in North-western Asia Minor, became an empire which included the South-eastern Europe, Asia Minor and the Arab world, conquering thereafter (1453) also Istanbul.

This Empire, under the leadership of Suleiman the Magnificent (1494-1566), occupied most of the Balkan lands, Hungary and large areas of the Middle East and North Africa1.

According to Mehmet Özdogan, the Ottoman Empire ruled the Balkans and the Middle East for more than 600 years and "for the Ottomans, the Balkans were in fact the Empire’s heart rather than Anatolia." As he suggests, most monuments have been erected in the Balkans, without, though, them to being kept within the geographic area in an ideal preserving condition, except urban residential buildings and these especially due to purely touristic revenue reasons.

The contemporary Republic of Turkey (official instauration in 1923), is "genuine offspring" of the Ottoman Empire. In its territory, although from which there were detached some significant areas (such as the Balkan Peninsula, Cyprus, continental and insular Greece), were still included almost all areas considered by the western archaeologists as the cradle of culture and in which was detected – from even the time of the existence of the Empire - an especially large number of excavations.

This had also particular impact on the local archaeologists, thus resulting in the fact that

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1 Özdogan Mehmet, in Meskell Lynn, 2006
sciences such as archaeology and generally the promotion of cultural heritage in Turkey were being developed to a significant degree, imitating mostly the western standards\(^2\).

There are few cases, however, when Turkey has been blamed for "selective destruction of antiquities". Of course (according to the same investigator, Mehmet Özdogan), its scientists exult conflicting, expanding of views which refer to disasters during industrialization period travelled by the country as well as the inadequate implementation of the legislation on the registration of Turkey’s cultural heritage. This record, not having been completed up to now, has also similar effects on Ottoman residues along with those of other historical periods, such as the Byzantine period\(^3\).

**Architecture**

The cultural heritage of Turkey is being influenced by the Arabic, the Byzantine and the Western culture. The period after the Conquest of Constantinople by Mehmet II the Conqueror, was for the Ottoman Empire an important milestone in its evolution. Among others, it was characterized by extensive artistic and architectural creations, especially works of religious, as well as, secular architecture, of monumental scale.

Later, during the 18\(^{th}\) century, when the Empire met with deteriorating situations, the last period of cultural activity - known as the Tulip period (Liale devri: 1703 – 1730), constitutes, according to Aristides Passadaios, the last Ottoman attempt to architectural and artistic expression, with obvious western influences, especially at decoration\(^4\).

During the decline period of the Ottoman Empire and especially from the Russo-Turkish War (1878-1879) until the Balkan wars, Turkey lost a large part of its territories. However, the Ottoman Empire has passed to us not only religious monuments, but also an example of traditional architecture, as a result of the common to all Balkan populations’ cultural tradition.

The geographic location and history graced Turkey with countless historical monuments, which were adopted as part of its cultural heritage, without any distinction between populations and cultures being grown for centuries consecutively on its territory. The heritage of traditional architecture possesses a particularly special place.

The Ottomans, after the establishment of their empire, created at the dominated territories their religious and secular (monumental) architecture. Their (folksy) traditional architecture has been also developed during that same period.

The traditional way of life is one of the main factors that determined the spirit and the form of folk architecture. The Turkish tradition has its roots both in its primitive history ethics and its Islam worldview. However, according to Haliuk Sezgin, among the particular architectural and construction features which the Ottomans brought from the East, they also assimilated many of those found in the conquered regions, developing thereafter a complex cultural character\(^5\).

**Determinants of Turkish traditional architecture**

Undoubtedly the Turkish house is distinguished by certain, almost unchangeable

\(^2\) Özdogan Mehmet, in Meskell Lynn, 2006

\(^3\) Özdogan Mehmet, in Meskell Lynn, 2006, Papadopoulou-Symeonidou Parysatis, 2003

\(^4\) Passadaios Aristides, 1981

\(^5\) Sezgin Haliuk, in Balkan Traditional Architecture, 1993
characteristics, derived from living standards and social specifications. Because of the compulsory by the Islamic dogma segregation between men and women, there had been arisen the necessity of distinction between "harem" and "selamlik". At the general floor plan of the house, such a distinction came over only on large residencies of Ottoman capital city at the end of 19th century. On the common urban and rural house, on the contrary, the resolution of the distinction between "harem" and "selamlik" was their placement on different floors. Nevertheless, the upper level was always designed for the private life of the family. The same applies to all houses, regardless of form and construction materials.

The main determinant of Turkish traditional architecture is the life model of residents, itself, that is to say the social customs, the religious moral principles, the production etc. A determinant of society is its cultural and economic structure. Anatolia and Eastern Rumelia, as they called the European part of Ottoman Empire, had a simple economic system, based on agriculture and farm products. Except wheat crop and stock farming in rural areas, there was also a pre-industrial production at the urban space. Agricultural life and economy had given a rather primitive look at houses, as there was often the demand of a large ground floor used as a stable and a storehouse of agricultural products. The mills, but mainly, the wheat and corn storehouses, called "serender" (serender: wooden wheat storehouse, very common along the east coast of Black Sea), are other constructions which belong to the main house, and they are rather rare and additional at those rural districts with a slightly higher income.

In the cities, on the contrary, manufacturing pushed certain changes on traditional buildings. On the houses, for instance, of Bithynia, where families were mainly working on silk mills, there was a special study for an attic especially to silkworm farming. Yet, along the Aegean Sea coast the carpet manufacturing demands the construction of additional auxiliary spaces on the ground floors of houses. The rest types of cottage industry do not ask for specific layout of the spaces of the building. That system was very popular all over Ottoman Empire, in contemporary Turkey and Northern Greece and Albania as well.

The modernity of traditional Turkish house

The modernity of the Turkish house is not only connected with the historical trend of modern Turkish architecture but also with the history of architecture in general, that means that many of its characteristics have served as points of reference for modern architecture.

The exploration of the history of architecture imposed on the architects of Western Europe to discover the Turkish house. Anyhow, those architects did not show any interest for the traditional architecture early and, in particular, no earlier than mid-19th century. Particularly prototype was the project of Nicolas Huyot (1780 – 1840). In 1817 and 1818, when he was traveling along the Turkish Aegean coast, was interested in traditional residences, impressing many plans (layouts) (in Istanbul, Therapeia, Dardanelles), whilst leaving an accurate and objective description of them. In 1991, the, approximately ten, sketches of Ottoman residences of European Turkey or Istanbul drew by Le Corbusier, indicate the intense interest they provoked to him.

The classicism (mainly, historicism) appeared in Turkey in the 1940’s with the "Second Nationalism of Architecture", headed of which was professor Eldem Sedad who also expressed himself in many projects currently adorning the coastline of Bosporus.

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6 Mauer Elisabeth, Maurer Ursula, 1975
Let us note that the modernity of Turkish house also consists in its typological elements. The drift of the centre of significance from the external to internal part of the house, occurred by the presence of "sofa" in the ottoman house, is a still existing element to some countries. Thus, it’s given the impression that the urban house with central yard tends to be an apartment with a main central space.

It is remarkable that the Turkish traditional/folk house, thanks to the favorable conditions within Ottoman Empire, turned out to be a new-formed Balkan style.

Apart of it, the outlook, or rather the outlook characteristics of Turkish traditional house, influenced certain contemporary architects of the country, who turned to traditional values. During the recent years, at the privileged districts of big Turkish cities, there have been constructed some buildings which are very successful copies of former ones. Apart from those samples, yet, there’s also a tendency to post-modernization, particularly dangerous when in wrong hands with limited knowledge and skills.

**Urban planning**

It is known that Ottomans, since their early conquests in the Balkan Peninsula, did not cause any changes in the external view of the villages, but, they significantly changed, however, the external appearance of the cities, leaving their permanent stamp to them. The medieval Islamic culture invading the Balkans is primarily urban culture.

The key feature of the medieval Muslim city is the absence of organic building blocks, as it consists of several self - administered groups. The idea of self - administration was further strengthened by the theocratic principle, upon which was based the Ottoman state, as it demanded the organization of the population according to their religion. The inhabitants with common religion or common employment lived in separate districts with their own religious sites. The differentiated "mahalas" is the typical characteristic of the Ottoman city.

Reference area of the city was the "charsi / bazaar", a central street where all commercial and production activities / functions were gathered in sheds and rough open markets, in others shaded, as well as in solid corresponding commercial constructions, the "bezestenes / covered markets". Here were assembled all the "hania / inns" (hostels for merchants) and the various warehouses. The guild professional organization (in "isnafia") dictated housing of shops and workshops of every guild in a certain space and the organization of individual stores within specialities.

The centre included the great mosque of the city and around it – in a residential complex – the rest religious and spiritual institutions. The management (administrational) centre along with the military, police and market regulations services were often located in the fortified part of the town, the castle.

According to the Bulgarian historian and diplomat N.Todorov, in his book "Balkan City"10, a second essential feature of the Ottoman city is the direct intervention of central authority in economic life through legislation and control. Thus, the population of the Balkan Muslim city can be divided into two main categories: the representatives of authority, as

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7 Eldem Sedad Hakki, 1968
8 International Council on the Monuments and Sites, 1977
9 Moutsopoulos K. Nikolaos, 1988
10 Todorov Nikolai, 1983
well as those who maintained the city’s prestige, namely the administration, and the ordinary citizens, the rays, who produced the material goods.

After the Ottoman conquest all Balkan cities were organized within this context. Many of them had become remarkable economic centers, by the Byzantine era, thanks also to their important geographical location.

As it is known, the Ottoman Empire has since 1838 entered a new phase of economic and sociopolitical reforms aiming to modernize the state apparatus, to the westernization of the society and to discharge the legislation from religious law.

In order to recover from the economic crisis and the technological underdevelopment, the Empire attempts to implement a range of social and institutional changes based on western standards. "These reforms introduce new perceptions and institutions which, despite their opposition to the old values and traditions of centuries meant for the officials of the government and the bureaucrats of the Ottoman capital progress and modernization. The major urban centres and particularly the capital city take advantage of the beneficial effects of these modernizing reforms in terms of urban but also architectural design", as demonstrated (Celik Z., 1986).

The primary keystone of reforms is to grant equal rights to all citizens of the Empire, regardless of their religion and nationality, and more specifically, to provide them with the right of ownership and disposal of real property within the borders of the empire.

The equality of national – religious minorities with the Muslim and the fact they were more ready to accept the westernization attempted in terms of the Tanzimat (reforms), places them in an advantageous position. The communities, as providers of European ideas and because of close relationships with communities of the same nationality in Western countries, know how to exploit the new economic conditions and are leaders in introducing new standards in the fields of education, social services, community organization and planning.

Moreover, the introduction of foreign technology and know – how, the establishment of technical high schools and technical military schools, the establishment of the School of Fine Arts and the enactment of new building regulations, permit to emerge the suitable conditions for a range of interventions aimed at modernizing the function of the city and constructing a network of new building types coming to meet new operational and housing needs.

In this way, the institutional changes which began since the declaration of the Tanzimat found immediate application in the urban space and architecture. The result was the transformation of the image of the classical Ottoman – Islamic city to a more cosmopolitan one, with new styles and shapes of buildings with obvious influences from the corresponding western standards\(^\text{11}\).

The urban planning first applied in Constantinople. The first planning was carried out in 1836-37 by Von Moltke. In the context of that project the first building issue was published, in 1839, followed by the issue "Ebniye Nizamnamesi\(^\text{12}\) which was replaced in 1855 by the regulation "Sehremanet\(^\text{13}\) that was being applied by the city administration. In 1864 by the "Turuk ve Ebniye" issues there were defined the building terms and in 1870

\(^{11}\) Celik Z., 1986. Asteriadou Eleni, 2006
\(^{12}\) Dinçer İclal. & Akin O., 1994
\(^{13}\) Tekeli İhan, 1998
by the Act "Vilayetler Kanunu" a new centre had been designed in Constantinople with the
purpose to accommodate the state employees. At that new centre were built the State
Headquarters and the buildings of the Municipality, the Railroad Station and the Court
House.

In 1887, during the First Constitutional Period with the Acts referred to Municipalities
(Belediye Kanunları) the above mentioned project became famous all over the Ottoman
Empire and the urban planning was familiar in other cities out of Constantinople. During
the application of the above Acts certain improvements had been advanced, which were
analogous to political, economical and military progresses. Those specific improvements
referred to the widening of roads, to the setting up of districts to accommodate refugees
and to the construction of buildings for military purposes of that time.

During the period of capitalist growth and setting up of industrial cities there was not any
plan of protection on urban level and important buildings of the urban tissue were not
protected. The up-to-date planning of western urban areas influenced the Ottoman Empire
only in the field of widening of roads, of forming new districts round the urban centres and
of the fire protection\textsuperscript{14}. In addition to the above, in 1910 in the context of city elegance
there was decided and widespread the opening (breaking) and setting up of the
environment of monuments with the purpose to enhance them, changing, thus, the
traditional urban tissue and destroying certain monuments, being characterized as of minor
importance.

Along with the instauration of Turkish democracy on October, 29, 1923, and after setting
Ankara as its capital city, since the first decade of national Turkish state there were
forwarded a series of important statutes and administrative regulations for the planning of
capital city, which would be the first urban centre of Anatolia\textsuperscript{15}. With the town planning of
Ankara it was also noted, at the same time, a quick growth of the rest cities of the country,
but with an -on-a-reduced-scale- urban planning. In the course of time and after the
changes which stemmed from technical and industrial development, the concept of an
elegant city was replaced by the concept of practical city\textsuperscript{16}.

\textbf{Figure.1. Monumental (ekistics, cultural) heritage in modern Turkey}

\textsuperscript{14} Dinçer  clal. & Akin O., 1994
\textsuperscript{15} Dinçer  clal. & Akin O., 1994
\textsuperscript{16} Dinçer  clal. & Akin O., 1994, Zeren Nuran, 1981
The institutional framework for the protection of monuments in Turkey

It is notable that Turkey is the first Islamic country actively involved in the field of cultural heritage and is the first country that initiated the Europeanization of administration system already since the 19th century, when the Ottoman Empire still existed. Within the system of Europeanization was also included the protection of monuments.

In 1884, Osman Hamdi Bey, director of the Imperial Museum, formulated a law on the protection of antiquities. This law was so complete that it was applied until 1972. What’s more, the Ottoman legislation was first to ban the export of antiquities and the Ottoman Empire was the first to accept foreign archaeological missions, a fact which still happens, and the first that created archaeological schools.

Regarding the institutional framework for the protection of monuments, today’s Turkey is bound by the Hague Convention (1954), Paris Convention (1972) and Granada Convention (1985), having validated the above conventions.

Turkey applies the law 2863/21.07.1983, revised by the laws 3386/17.06.1987 and 5226 "On Protection of Cultural & Natural Heritage". In accordance with the provisions of this law, the Ministry of Culture & Tourism of Turkish Republic is the responsible governmental service for the registration and protection of cultural monuments located within the borders of the country. The registration of the monuments is carried out in accordance with their nature. Thus the monuments are either attached in the General Directorate of Foundations, Mosques and Mausoleums, or in the General Directorate of Cultural Heritage and Museums. Both General Directorates come under the Ministry of Culture & Tourism of the Republic of Turkey.

The law defines as first and highest priority the protection of monuments. In the beginning, it defines the immovable cultural goods, which are part of cultural heritage, and proceeds to the measures to be taken for their protection. It is notable that as immovable cultural goods, according to the institutional framework of Turkey, are meant tombstones, calligraphic inscriptions, illustrated caves, tombs, historical sights (acropolis, necropolis), castles, bastions, forts, caravanserais, inns, Islamic seminaries, graves, mausoleums, bridges, aqueducts, ruins of a historical road, tanks, wells, altars, shipyards, palaces, mansions, houses and more.

The 1980’s was for Turkey crucial for forming the perception about cultural heritage and its protection. The time coincides with the end of military dictatorship and the major effort towards the modernization of the country at all levels, under the leadership of the reformist Turgut Özal, who remained consecutively Prime Minister (1983 – 1989) and President of the Republic (1989 – 1993).

Part of this context is the explicit provision of article 63 of the Constitution of 1982 according to the content of which the State secures the preservation of historical, cultural and natural resources and wealth, and takes measures to support and promote this purpose. Also, a series of laws and regulations, such as law 2863 of 1983 on protection of cultural and natural heritage and subsequently various amendments and additions made by laws 3386 in 1987 and 5226 in 2004, as well as other legislative regulations.

Turkey of the 80’s, with renewed confidence and exempt from narrow notions, considers...
that its historical course and geographical position make it somehow heir of the civilizations developed in the regions of Anatolia and Thrace during their long – standing history: According to Sevil Yildiz, it is about the cultures of "... the peoples of Anatolia (Hittites, Lydians, Carians, Phrygians, etc.), the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea (Mycenaean, Greek, Roman Byzantine), Central Asia, Iran, Arabs, Seljuks and Ottomans)."

The diversity and richness of this cultural environment make Turkey unique global example, but in the same time, theoretically, they put it also on charge to protect its cultural heritage and preserve it for future generations.

It is also to be noted that Turkey participates actively in international organizations, signed the Convention for the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage of UNESCO (1983), and incorporated the European Convention for the Conservation of Architectural Heritage (1985) and the Convention on the Protection of the Mediterranean.

As "World Heritage Sites", in the framework of Unesco, Turkey has defined: 1) Historic areas of Istanbul, 2) Archaeological site of Troy, 3) City of Safranbolu, 4) Capital of the Hittite, Hattusha, 5) Sacred mosque and hospital of Divrigi, 6) Mount Nemrut, 7) National park of Goreme and rocks of Cappadocia, 8) Hierapolis – Pamukkale, 9) Xanthos – Letoon.

Today, apart from the official bodies, there participate on a reduced scale and Non Governmental Organizations also, as the Association of Historic cities, the Environment Volunteers (Çevgön), and many others.

Conclusions or an evaluation of monumental heritage management in Turkey

Turkey entered systematically the field of protection of cultural heritage in the last quarter of 20th century, creating a solid framework of legislative protection. But, as it happens in other areas, also, legislation and announcements encounter problems and difficulties during the implementation phase, due to various reasons, from which the most general are quoted.

All traditional societies – and Turkey is one of them – face problems associated with rapid social and economic change, due to the high urbanization, population growth and industrialization. As a developing country, Turkey is facing a series of environmental problems that result from development and modernization but, of course, natural factors, also, such as rough terrain, high seismic activity and erosion. The main environmental problems are developed at the National Environmental Action Plan of Turkey.

As noticed, however, environmental problems do not cease to be, interactively, social problems too, which reflect the interaction between the change of resources, the human productive activities and the transformations of human life. This view is verified impressively in the case of GAP (Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi – Southeastern Anatolia Project) that concerns large-scale interventions (series of dams, hydroelectric works and irrigating reservoirs) in the region of the rivers Tigris and Euphrates bringing about the sinking of entire areas and the forced relocation of thousands of residents. Naturally, the

20 Ö zal Turgut, 1986
21 Yildiz Sevil, 2010
22 http://www.unesco.org/culture
23 Özdemir İbrahim, in Folitz Richard, 2003
24 Morvaridi Behrooz, 1995
25 http://www.gap.gov.tr
cultural heritage will not remain unaffected. As Nathalie Tocci notes, "the GAP threatens the cultural heritage of the area. Several archaeological sites along the Euphrates have flooded. With the construction of the dam on the Tigris river (meaning the dam Ilisu), the magnificent ancient city in Hasankeyf is doomed to perish beneath water".26

The sensitization of the residents, attributed to awareness of the need to protect the natural environment, the activation of numerous non governmental organizations with environmental, ecological and cultural agenda and the increasingly important position occupied by these subjects at all grades of education make residents an appreciable pressure lever in the government, even though often it is about protest reactions with limited, local, interest.

In the context of protection of the cultural heritage, under the strict sense, namely the officially designated Monuments of World Heritage, the problems arising, consicely, are: 1) Lack of adequate and effective planning (Management Plan, Tourist/Visitor Management Plan). 2) Definition of "neutral" zone of protection (Buffer zone). 3) Awareness of the local population. 4) Administrative structures and appropriate staff. 5) Communication and cooperation between among involved bodies. 6) Financial resources.27

Turkey, as a country which has historical bonds with ancient civilizations, has also to face many problems, under the influence of both natural and social factors, as long as it regards the preservation of its historic environment. The loss of cultural heritage is evident mainly in large cities with intense tourist development, such as Istanbul.28

Linking cultural heritage with tourism – under the umbrella of the same Ministry (the same is applied to other countries too) – Turkey is trying to secure the conditions for the sustainable development, promotion and protection of cultural heritage.

Tourism, a phenomenon that showed very strong development during the last decades, is regarded to contribute greatly to the contact of the people with cultural heritage and the awareness of citizens in local but also hyper-local level, combined with the modern informative and communication media. Simultaneously, it also comprises an important source of funding cultural organizations and supporting financially local communities.

There is, however, a serious doubt as regards the impact of tourism, and the subsequent "development" of the environment mainly of the historic cities, as well as the role of tourism in preserving cultural heritage. The touristic industry is accused of having changed the history into a commercial product, sold and reproduced. The historical and urban areas are concerned as resources that can be directly transformed into products for sale to consumers looking for "experiences.29

The richness and polymorphism of Turkish cultural heritage is one of the most important touristic resources. Consequently, the cultural tourism holds a significant place among other kinds of tourism. This fact functions as a determinant for the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage. The worth of cultural tourism becomes a national strategy that centres on the promotion of Turkish cultural values, values which bring considerable profits. The promotion of cultural heritage within the above context is encouraged on all levels by the state, the non governmental organisations, the local self-government, local societies and travel agencies. Messages referred to cultural heritage are sent and

26 Tocci Nathalie, 2001  
27 Somuncu Mehmet and Yiğit Turgut, 2010  
28 Cengiz M., 1997  
transmitted through publications (posters, brochures, articles on magazines and newspapers), through television programmes, documentary films and through internet\textsuperscript{30}.

The cultural heritage as a touristic product is an important part of tourism, in general. Today, special excursions are planned by local societies and travel agencies, directing to target groups of various interests. The tourist centers of attraction are religious points, historic cultural paths (the travel, for instance, in ancient Lycia, the apostolic route of Saint Paul, the Silk Road etc), building constructions from a specific architectural period or a particular architect or buildings of a special style\textsuperscript{31}.

As an epilogue, we mention the following:

In Turkey the legislation about the protection of cultural heritage followed a procedure which started from the protection of an historic object, proceeded as the protection of a building and turned out to become the protection of a whole district/thorp. On that progressive procedure we notice the below:

On 20\textsuperscript{th} century it had been started the formation of institutional and juridical background concerning the protection of monumental wealth and the first step had been made to institutionalize it by establishing the Supreme Council of Historic Objects and Monuments. In 1950 the urban planning was being wider and the subject began to be discussed within academic terrain. At 1970’s the notion of protection turned out to mean ‘area under protection’. With the help of the academic sensitiveness it was passed the law about historic monuments, and, their localization, documentation and registration began. At 1980’s, apart from the planning, it had also started the institutionalization of the bodies which would take actual part on that protection subject. On the scientific part of the procedure there was academic participation so to start the harmonization with the respective international protection procedures. For this purpose it was passed the law about cultural and natural wealth protection and it was forwarded the concept of reconstruction, aiming to protection, while it was secured the regular reconstruction with different plan. At the first decade of 2000 it went on the institutionalization of the bodies that would participate actively both on planning and in protection. The participation of scientists of the academic field continued and the Municipalities, after the reassurance of international cooperation, played a dominant role regarding the protection of urban cultural heritage. By the passing of the new law Nr. 5226 the subject of protection of historic monuments and cultural heritage was placed on a more stable basis.

The advantages, however, are the richness of cultural and natural elements, the presence of one single authority for the application and control of preservation issues, the sensitivity of bodies such as universities and non governmental organizations, and also, a course of researching projects run by governmental organizations. It is also noticed, due to political reasons mainly, an organized attempt to the provision of technical and financial support so as to preserve and promote the ottoman monuments out of Turkey.

Counter to the above, there exist the difficulties noticed on choosing and determining the ‘under protection’ areas because of the multitude of candidate places, due to lack of experienced staff and cooperation among the responsible organizations. On that fact comports also the lack of financial resources, of proper information/sensitization of public opinion, of professional training as regards the protection, of reconstruction and maintenance and also of inadequacy of training programs on the particular subject.

\textsuperscript{30} Orbaşlı Aylin, 2003
According to the Council of Europe, Turkey shall have to establish a responsible implementation service or services and to adopt work schedules. On this project would contribute greatly certain international bodies/bureaus, the enhancement of information of the public and the active participation of the public.

Finally, it would be omission not to mention the fact that Turkey during the recent years takes advantage of cultural heritage so as to succeed very specific political goals: the opening of the Monastery of Panagia Soumela on August, 15th, 2010, although it would be characterized as an acknowledgement of Christian minority’s religious rights with positive public impression for Turkey, as a result, it had, nevertheless, not an inconsiderable contribution to the tourist-financial field. It is discussed, for this reason, among local bodies, the chance of the opening of the Monastery during the other Christian feast days, while it is discussed, also, within certain environments the possibility to celebrate Mass in Agia Sofia in Constantinople32. Considering, in parallel the ‘New-ottoman’ orientation of contemporary foreign affairs policy of Turkey, the necessity of reconstruction and promotion of ottoman monuments, mainly in Balkan, is clearly observable.

In conclusion it is noted that modern Turkey is in transitional stage and the attempt to balance tradition and modernization leads to a cultural dualism (Tradition and Modernity). A dualism, evident in all aspects of life and is often associated with westernization and acceptance or rejection of Ottoman and Islamic elements.

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**Brief biography**

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