

## **The Role of Heritage Conservation in the Management Of Urban Regions**

### **Introduction**

Although heritage conservation is not new, for a long time it has been object-oriented and its scope has traditionally been limited to single buildings. Area based protection and its integration to public policy is a rather recent phenomenon. In many countries, rapid urban development and change during the post-war era constituted a major threat for heritage, and urban identity was in peril. Oppositions to the loss of urban identity as a result of massive housing projects and comprehensive redevelopment schemes led to the realization of the merits of protecting the historic character of towns.

Heritage conservation acquired yet another tone and became one of the popular urban strategies over the last two decades. The re-structuring of the world economy left many cities vulnerable to the adverse effects of globalization and flows of footloose capital. Loss of investment and jobs on the one hand, and homogenizing impacts of cultural flows on the other, led the cities to look for new ways out of the impasse created by the process of globalization. For this purpose, cities began to compete with each other for investment, for jobs, for subsidies, for visitors; for visibility and prestige; they began to look for recognition and for being known for what they have and others don't. They promoted themselves in the global market offering their special character as a rare quality. All in all, they continually spend efforts to brandize themselves in order to get a mark on the map as a point of attraction and preferably a 'popular' one.

Thus, culture-led regeneration, which often goes hand in hand with tourism-led regeneration, became a widespread urban strategy pursued by many cities. Heritage, in this context, constitutes an invaluable asset; a major strength and opportunity, which provides the cities with a competitive edge on the global market. Tourism, on other hand, is both a blessing and threat for the cultural heritage. While it has the potential to make conservation economically feasible; it carries the risk of commodifying heritage and jeopardizing its authenticity.

Viewed from this perspective, Anatolia is a special case extremely rich in terms of cultural heritage reflecting many different layers of history with traces of a multitude of cultures and civilizations from pre-historic times to the present<sup>1</sup>. Thus, most Turkish cities have the privilege of having such a rich heritage. When the rich array of heritage sites under protection (along the ones that have not yet been listed and designated so far) is taken into account the importance of heritage in the management of urban regions is a matter that can hardly be overlooked or underestimated. Given the ethical and professional concerns for sustainability and better management of cultural and natural resources in the context of the global climate of competition, heritage conservation becomes a pivotal component of sound planning policies.

This paper explores the synergy created by a civil initiative, Turkish Association of Historical Towns and Regions (TAHTR), which sparked a new interest in cultural heritage and natural values and had a positive impact on conservation policies in a country like Turkey, which is an extremely rich in terms of cultural and natural values. In the Turkish context, this synergy to protect and enhance the heritage resources is a rather crucial one given the highly speculative land market where local politics have long been mediated through building rights and the maximum exploitation of urban land.

## **Heritage in the Context of Turkish Urbanization**

As its counterparts in the developed world, heritage conservation is not new in Turkey. Legislative protection of cultural heritage in Turkey goes back to the Ottoman times and was introduced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the Law on Antiquities passed in 1850. The first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century after the abolition of the Ottoman political structure and the inauguration of the Turkish Republic (1923) witnessed an increased emphasis on the protection of the cultural heritage. In the early years of the Turkish Republic, especially during 1920s and 30s, protection and restoration of monuments and archeological sites was given a prime importance. Founders of the Republic, whose ideology was based on enlightenment, saw it as their moral duty to protect the many layers of history and cultural products of various periods and civilizations that flourished in the Anatolian soil. Thus, active measures were taken and resources were allocated for the restoration of a quite significant number of monuments and archeological excavations, even though the resources of the young Turkish Republic were rather scarce.

In parallel to the prevalent approaches to conservation worldwide, this spur for heritage protection was initially targeted to single monumental buildings and archeological sites; and did not encompass the ordinary buildings and large urban areas. Unshielded by the protective measures of the early Republican years, the urban fabric composed of non-monumental, ordinary residential architecture easily came under attack during the era of rapid urbanization after the 1950s.

1950s marked the beginning of a new era in the Turkish context in many ways. The new government, who took the office in the elections of 1950, adopted a much more liberal orientation and pursued different economic policies, which aimed to give private sector a larger lot in economic as well as urban development. The policies adopted by the new government also changed the emphasis from industrial development to agricultural development by means of mechanization, which had been a corner stone in the unprecedented acceleration of urbanization. Thus, major cities of the country began to experience an unparalleled rate of growth, making housing the most urgent need and urban land as a major means of capital formation. What followed was an extremely speculative urban land market, which increasingly brought the urban fabric under pressures of renewal and change.

This era of rapid transformation rested on the tripartite alliance between small land owners, entrepreneurs with little or no capital and local authorities, all whom acted as the major agents of change. Land owners did not have any other capital than the small piece of land they owned; the entrepreneurs did not have capital enough for both buying and developing the urban land. Therefore, they brought their resources together in a rather peculiar and innovative way, which would benefit them both given the building rights were increased and densification of the urban fabric was allowed. Here, came to the stage the local politicians, whose political carrier and survival rested on these newly emerging demands. Under this newly formed alliance, in less than 2 decades since the 1950s, the face of Turkish cities changed significantly and almost out of recognition and major part of the traces and memories of the past vanished.

The rapid loss of the urban fabric as well as natural areas and agricultural lands surrounding the cities was not only a consequence of rapid urbanization. People's aspiration for modern living, which was symbolized in the newly built apartment houses with all the conveniences of modern life, was also a significant factor that exacerbated the transformation and/or destruction of the urban fabric and the surrounding open spaces and agricultural fields. Especially, given a highly inflationary and uncertain economic circumstances, people rushed to build on every piece of lot they had, tearing down the single family homes to make way for apartment buildings, which would allow them to have extra units for rent or sale. This trend

was intensified by the Condominium Law, first passed in the early 1950s and amended in the 1960s, which made individual flats legal units of ownership. As a result, even the cities, which did not experience such rapid rates of growth, were not spared of the consequences of this quest for modern living and economic gain.

The process of rapid transformation in Turkish cities somewhat resembled those of its counterparts in the western world, albeit for different structural reasons and with varying physical manifestations. But common to all was a process of transformation which signaled a significant loss of heritage values, that comprised an indispensable part of cultural identity.

The alarming rate of loss of the familiar environment, eventually led to new precautions in order to protect what was left from this unruly urban development. In this context, a new piece of legislation in 1971 was passed in Turkey at about the same time similar initiatives were taken in most European countries.<sup>2</sup> As its counterparts, this was an important piece of legislation, which introduced the notion of area-protection instead of single buildings.<sup>3</sup> However, without being backed up with accompanying policy measures towards integrating heritage to the mainstream of planning, the Act could not go beyond imposing 'negative' controls for protection. Thus, it mainly stayed as an act of 'passive' protection.

In the meanwhile, the dominant attitude towards heritage other than those of the unquestionable monuments continued. Protected sites and ordinary buildings under protection were still seen as obstacles for economic gain and impediments for progress. Heritage protection was literally equated with staying poor. And yet, the prevalent paradigm of planning, which placed emphasis on change and development fell short in providing viable alternatives that would integrate heritage in urban development policies. On the other hand, local politics continued to be mediated through grants for increased building rights and the maximum exploitation of land. In this context, municipal authorities took pride in being the facilitators and agents of "new" and "modern" developments. Although the introduction of the concept of 'Conservation Plan' in 1983 by a new Act on the Protection of the Cultural and Natural Heritage was a step forward, it nevertheless was not sufficient by itself to induce an active protection without accompanying changes in the prevalent planning system, which largely remained to be a static, 'blue-print' approach. In the absence of a perspective that puts heritage to the center of planning, together with the absence of sufficient strategies for the management of change, protected areas were most often than not, left to deterioration.

#### **'Light Came Down on the Flea Market'<sup>4</sup>: Heritage in the Post-1980s**

Like 1950s, 1980s marked yet another major turning point in Turkey, influenced also by the global re-structuring of the world economy. It was during the early 1980s that there was a significant change in the country's macro-economic policies, which were geared towards integrating Turkish economy with the world markets. Economic liberalization, efforts to integrate new information technologies, institutional changes were all different aspects of integrating Turkey to the global economy, which had important repercussions on Turkish society as well as its cities.

One of the important legislative acts of this period was the new Act on Urban Development passed in 1985, which had a crucial impact on the environment and heritage values. With this Act, the authority to make plans, which was vested until then in the planning organs of the central government, was conceded to the local level. This was a significant democratic move. However, the newly acquired power at the local level, gave the alliance between landowners, developers and newly emerged large construction firms and the politicians more room for speculative development bringing the fragile cultural and natural resources into peril more than ever before.

The period since the 1980 also witnessed policies that aimed to booster tourism sector, which was seen as one of the prime engines that would help to upsurge the Turkish economy capitalizing on the many valuable natural and cultural assets the country had. Thus, the central government pursued vigorous policies that supported mass tourism and offered incentives to attract tourists as well as foreign direct investments to the country.<sup>5</sup> The government allocated large tracks of land and granted building rights to spur investments; and made improvements in the infrastructure and transportation systems. The 3 S's (Sun, Sea and Sand) were the part and parcel of these policies oriented towards mass tourism and thus, the coastal towns and regions along the Aegean and the Mediterranean became the most attractive tourist destinations of the country. The concentration of tourist industry in these coastal regions had two major impacts: while, the natural and cultural capital in these regions were put under the threat of overexploitation and unsustainable development; towns and regions in other parts of the country, which lacked the advantages of the popular 3S's were overshadowed by the concentration of investments and tourism activity in the western and southern coasts. In their attempt to attract tourists and investments and to get a share from the global as well as the local tourism market, these disadvantageous towns and regions in the mid-1990s turned to their heritage values as assets in order to acquire a more competitive edge on the urban arena. This was also seen as a way out of the 1999 economic crises that swept the country.

### **Pioneers of Heritage Conservation**

A few individual actors played a key role in triggering an interest in heritage conservation in Anatolian towns. The pioneers of this movement were largely central government officials, mainly the provincial governors, who undertook exemplary conservation projects. This new outlook was also supported by the Ministry of Interior in the mid-1990s, Saadettin Tantan, who was the former Major of one of the districts in the historic core of Istanbul and who actively pursued policies in favor of conservation. This climate supportive of conservation was also fed by the dedicated efforts of a number of individuals and non-profit organizations who laid down the groundwork for many years. Among them were Turing-Turkey, whose director was an ardent conservationist and owing to his efforts many restoration and conservation projects were undertaken in Istanbul; The Foundation for the Monuments and Natural Environments of Turkey (*TAC Vakfi*); The Association for the Protection of Historic Houses; and the Foundation for the Protection of Environmental and Cultural Values (*CEKUL*). The latter, CEKUL foundation, founded and led by Prof. Metin Sozen had a special importance in creating an army of volunteers, especially of young people, and spreading this movement to the country by the multiplication of its representatives in Anatolian cities. Here, the efforts of the Turkish Chamber of Architects, especially under the presidency Oktay Ekinci<sup>6</sup> and Chamber of Planners deserve a special note of attention.

Other factors that contributed to this climate can be attributed to architectural and planning education. Over the last 2 decades concepts such as heritage, culture, identity of place, sense of belonging and sustainability found an increasingly greater place in the educational curricula changing the outlook of the younger generation of professionals. Finally, it can also be said that Habitat II meeting held in Istanbul in 1996, had a profound triggering effect on the re-flourishing of civil initiatives especially among younger generations of people. A number of NGO's such as Local Agenda 21, Youth for Habitat and LA21 bloomed upon the impetus given by Habitat II. These movements, which voice demands for more participatory modes of governance, also take the protection of environmental and cultural values as their primary cause. Branching out and organizing within various parts of the country, these young people now began to act as major agents of change, potentially transmitting a new set of values to the society.

All these initiatives set into motion the formation of a frontier of resistance to ruthless, speculative developments, which jeopardize the cultural and natural assets of the country.

They were soon able to reach out and touch the local municipalities who are the real decision-makers at the local level.

### **Towards ‘Cities That Protect Themselves:’ Foundation of the Turkish Association of Historic Towns and Regions**

At a time when all these NGO’s promoted an atmosphere supportive of heritage conservation, Turkish Association of Historic Towns and Regions (TAHTR) was established in 22 July 2000 with the participation of 52 municipalities as founding members.

The foundation of the Association was a continuation of the process, which was initiated with the appointment of the Municipality of Bursa<sup>7</sup> by the Ministry of Culture to represent Turkey in the inaugural meeting of the European Association of Historic Towns and Regions (EAHTR). This inaugural meeting was held within the context of EC’s campaign for ‘Europe: A Common Heritage’ in 7-8 October 1999 in Strasburg. A resolution following the foundation of EAHTR stated that each member country should establish their own national association of historic towns and regions. This call was very well received by the Turkish National Committee on EC’s campaign for ‘Europe: A Common Heritage’ and Municipality of Bursa was given the duty of coordinating this task.

A preparatory meeting was organized by the City of Bursa. Held in 22 July 2000, this meeting was intended to provide an initial platform for the exchange of ideas at the national level. However, the idea of establishing an association of historic towns and regions with a mission to protect cultural heritage was so well received by the participant municipalities that the preparatory meeting turned out to be an inaugural one, in which the decision to set up the association was taken with a profound enthusiasm. In 28 September 2000, the inauguration of the association was officially announced in The *Official Gazette*. In May 2001, TAHTR became the 12<sup>th</sup> member of the EAHTR.

CEKUL, was perhaps the major architect of this process, which eventually paved the way for the foundation of the TAHTR. As the Major of Bursa, the first president of the TAHTR, put it in the 1<sup>st</sup> Council meeting of the Association ‘for a long time CEKUL tilled this though soil, now, we will carefully raise the seeds.’<sup>8</sup>

### **Towards Development by Protection: ‘A Long Dedicated Journey’**

As stated in its Charter, the mission of TAHTR is to mobilize local people and politicians nationwide for the protection of heritage resources and natural values. It sees conservation as a strategy of development in which local and regional identities are protected. Thus, as various members of the Association state it over and over again, heritage conservation is seen as ‘long dedicated journey’<sup>9</sup> towards the stated end. In this long journey the Association aims to:

- Promote the idea ‘common heritage’
- Facilitate the protection of heritage by building up solidarity and co-operation among member cities of the TAHTR
- Facilitate co-operation between member cities of TAHTR and the EAHTR
- Foster the idea that heritage protection is not an impediment for progress; on the contrary, it contributes to economic development and it is, indeed, a precondition for sustainable development
- Develop a culture of participation and by changing the prevalent decision-making practices move the system towards good-governance
- Promote partnerships between public sector (both at local and central levels), private sector and civil society.

TAHTR adopts two main principles. First is the principle of neutrality. Protection of heritage is seen as a common cause that is beyond and above all political ideologies. Therefore, it is strongly stressed that the Association firmly stays at an equal distance to all political parties and its goal is to promote co-operation among municipalities no matter which political party is in office. The second one is the principle of co-operation among public bodies, professional organizations and NGO's that work towards a common cause, i.e. the protection of heritage.

### **Actions of TAHTR**

During the three years since it has been founded, TAHTR has been actively working towards its stated aims. All these activities generated a tremendous amount of synergy not only among its members but other cities as well. The synergy created by TAHTR eventually led to the formation of a movement that promoted heritage values as an indispensable part of urban identity. Major undertakings of the Association are as follows:

#### ***Meetings:***

One of the major activities that contributed to the creation of such a synergy and excitement around a common cause has been the meetings regularly held every 2-3 months. From the Bursa meeting of July 2000 to Sivas meeting of May 2004, TAHTR held 14 meetings, each in a different member city or a group of member cities in Anatolia. All of them were held with a large number of participants and brought together various actors. Present in these meetings were governors, officials from various branches of the central government, mayors of the member cities, members from city councils, representatives from various NGO's and academicians.

Each meeting had a specific theme. For instance, Nevsehir meeting of April 2001 was centered on 'Cultural Tourism.' Nevsehir meeting had a special importance because it was during this meeting that TAHTR submitted its application for membership to the Secretary General of EAHTR who was present at the meeting.

'Building Controls in Historic Cities' was the theme of the September 2001 meeting in Kars and 'being a true citizen requires responsibility towards cultural heritage' was its motto. Sanliurfa-Midyat-Hasankeyf-Diyarbakir meeting of May 2002 focused on 'Heritage Awareness and Education.' Soon afterwards, in another meeting held in Edirne in September 2002 a protocol with the Ministry of Education was signed to initiate a pilot project sponsored by the TAHTR to organize in the primary schools of Edirne and Kars lectures and seminars on urban history during the 2002-2003 school year<sup>10</sup>. Supported by field trips these lectures and seminars were aimed to give school children of Edirne and Kars basic knowledge about the history of their cities. This initiative was very well in line with the theme of the Edirne meeting, which focused on 'Co-operation for the Future of Natural and Cultural Heritage.'

With the declaration of the Ankara Forum in February 2003, '5 Years of Heritage Protection in Turkey 2003/2008' Campaign was given a start. Bartın-Amasra-Kastamonu meeting of April 2003, on the other hand, emphasized 'Conservation of Heritage at the Regional Level.'

In May 2003, TAHTR held its first international meeting in Bursa with the participation of representatives from important international organizations such as UNESCO-World Heritage Center, Council of Europe, EAHTR, ICOMOS and IULA; also present were representatives from a six European cities.<sup>11</sup> In this meeting, the member cities of TAHTR were exposed to the leading international bodies in the protection of cultural heritage and had an opportunity to share their experiences and ideas with other historic European cities. The theme of this international meeting was 'Local Governance for the Protection and Development of Cultural

Heritage.’ One important message that came out of this meeting was the urgent need for local action plans for the effective protection of heritage values.

In Izmir meeting of September 2003, problems of conservation in metropolitan cities were at the center of discussions. The central theme of the Yalvac meeting of October 2003, was partnerships between various sectors of the society (public, private, civil), which was from the beginning one of the major messages promoted by TAHTR.

Organized around a certain theme, each meeting provided a stimulating forum for the exchange of ideas and experiences and an invaluable platform for mutual learning. Field excursions were an integral part of these meetings, which offered participants the opportunity to get to know the heritage values of the host cities. Another major impact of the TAHTR meetings was the curiosity and interest they raised at the local level. With 200-300 participants, each meeting became a special event, especially for small towns which have not hosted such large meetings before. Various activities organized as part of the TAHTR meetings such as public exhibition of conservation projects by different cities, variety of shows and performances demonstrating local traditions and so on, all contributed to the creation of a festive atmosphere in celebration of cultural heritage, especially of the host city. Also, the excursions by the participants to the heritage sites raised awareness and gave the local people a sense of pride.

The meetings created such a zest that each one of them became a major event of ‘coming together,’ which the members looked forward to with great enthusiasm. Member cities considered it to be an honor to host one of these meetings. On the other hand, many other cities became eager to join this ‘long dedicated journey’ doubling the number of members within a short span of time.<sup>12</sup> As a result of the unprecedented synergy created by TAHTR the cities began to re-discover the value of their cultural heritage.

### ***Awards for Best Practices***

Each year since the Antalya meeting of May 2001, TAHTR gives awards for best practices in order to encourage the member cities to develop and implement conservation projects. Each year 3 best practices awards, 3 mansions and a varying number of certificate of achievements are given.

The projects that were deemed worthy of awards and mansions included a variety of projects different in scale and scope. There were projects that were at the scale of a single building, ranging in scope from restoration to adaptive re-use. There were projects at the scale of one or more streets, in which building facades were successfully repaired and restored and the urban quality was enhanced.

There were yet others much larger in scope. For instance, Diyarbakır integrated physical rehabilitation with social rehabilitation. The project for the clearance of Diyarbakır’s 5 kilometers long ancient city walls from illegal developments was accompanied by a project to re-locate the residents in another part of the city financed by public funds.

Another project with a larger scope was Izmir’s project for the ancient Agora and its surroundings. This was a significant project in terms of urban archeology, which involved the excavation of the ancient Agora located at the heart of the city where the land prices are extremely high and its integration with the rest of the city by strengthening its links with the historic districts of Kemeraltı and Kadifekale. Culture and tourism –led regeneration of the urban fabric surrounding the Agora is also a major component of the project with an emphasis on the revitalization of the traditional center.

Canakkale was another award winner for its participatory planning approach and the inclusion of a multitude of actors during the process of preparing its conservation plan. City of Yalvac, on the other hand, received the Metin Sozen Award for its project for the 'Protection and Enhancement of Natural and Cultural Values and Diversification of Tourism Types'

### ***Log Book of the 'Long Dedicated Journey': Journal of Local Identity***

An important contribution of TAHTR to this 'long dedicated journey' towards the conservation of heritage is the publication of a quarterly journal called the Local Identity. Each issue includes the major discussions and evaluations of the preceding meetings of the Association, gives information about the conservation projects carried out by different cities and plays a major role in conveying the message of solidarity around a common cause and sustaining the enthusiasm and synergy. The journal acts as the mortar that keeps the member cities together, reinforces their sense of belonging to TAHTR and enhances their identity as a historic city.

The journal also includes scholarly writings on various subjects ranging from planning, archeology to history. It also includes various international charters on heritage protection. Therefore, it educates as much as it informs readers particularly targeted to the local politicians and municipal staff.

### ***Support Center for the Protection of Heritage (KORDAM)***

A resolution was made in the council meeting dated 23 May 2002 to establish a Support Center for the Protection of Heritage in order to provide technical service to the member cities in developing and implementing conservation projects. The Center aims to provide a voluntary pool of consultants from various academic and professional circles (planners, architects, art historians, landscape architects and so on) who would give advice to municipalities on various matters. While it is still in its formative stages, KORDAM is a promising initiative in terms of increasing the quality of the projects by basing them on scientific and professional grounds.

### **Looking to the Future: Problems and Prospects**

As a reaction to the forces of globalization worldwide a renewed interest was born in heritage. Heritage conservation became a major means of integrating with the global economy as well as a means of re-claiming local identity against the homogenizing global currents. Beginning with the mid-1980's Turkey was also drawn into the global tides of change. In line with the global trends, heritage conservation in Turkey was also seen as a means of finding a niche in the global markets as well as a means for curbing the negative effects of cultural globalization. In other words, it was a time in which the value of the cultural heritage was rediscovered.

TAHTR was founded within this climate that favoured the conservation of cultural heritage. Its mission was to protect and enhance heritage values as well as to mitigate the impacts of the global forces, which increasingly resulted in the commodification of the cultural capital for the purposes of tourism.

Within a very short span of time after its foundation, TAHTR was able to create a tremendous synergy, which spurred an awareness of heritage resources especially at the local level changing the general attitude towards heritage in which it has for long been viewed as a hindrance for economic gain. TAHTR had a striking impact in uniting the member cities around a common cause. There was an important educational component to all the activities of the Association, and it was a crucial agent of capacity-building not only for the local governments but also for the public at large.



The synergy created by TAHTR also helped to make conservation a movement embraced by larger segments of the society and especially by local politicians who are the real decision-makers, instead of being a concern rather limited to intellectual and academic circles. The activities and efforts of the Association was also praised by the press and found a large place in the media. The noteworthy media coverage is another indicator of the impact TAHTR had and the synergy it created.

However, the new climate supportive of heritage conservation is still not without its problems. There are a variety of problems contingent upon the local factors. Yet, two interrelated problems can be identified. First one stems from the lack of a wholistic framework, with a perspective to integrate individual efforts of heritage conservation with wider policies both at the scale of the city and the region. Second, the prevalent statutory system as well as the culture of planning in Turkey reduces most planning endeavors to mere physical prescriptions. In the case where a well defined and shared vision for the future of the city with accompanying strategies to that end are lacking, the potential of historic environments to aid regeneration and local development cannot be fully exploited. Then, all the well-intended efforts for the protection of heritage stay as isolated attempts and fall short in providing the expected impetus for the development of the local economy, enhancement of the urban environment and the life of its citizens. Such isolated efforts usually remain limited to the restoration of a few historic buildings and their adaptation to new uses. The absence of coordinated action towards defining a vision based on the creative use of the city's resources results in the assignment of similar re-uses, leading to a surplus of local arts and crafts museums, surplus of cultural centers repeated in every other city, all eventually losing their attractiveness.

On the other extreme, are the one-sided policies, which lean heavily on one sector, i.e. tourism, regarded as the prime saviour of urban economy as well as of heritage values. In the context where heritage is rediscovered as a potential source for economic gain, many cities tend incorporated heritage conservation as a marketing strategy targeted towards tourist industry. However, tourism is a double-edged sword. While, it should be acknowledged that tourism provides opportunity for the protection of cultural heritage by making it economically viable, it also has major drawbacks. One major drawback arises when leads to the creation of "packaged and animated landscapes of heritage" for the purposes of tourism; and the other is gentrification. In either case, the heritage in question is commodified and its authenticity is jeopardized.

Clearly, there is a need to adapt the Turkish planning system so that it can be more responsive to the multitude of complex problems that many cities of the country face in a globalized and competitive world. There is a need for an integrated approach and establishment of closer ties between sectoral policies; a need to develop more participatory ways of planning in which various actors can play more effective roles in the planning process; a need to develop action plans for effective implementation and finally there is a need to mobilize local forces to come up with more creative ideas in the use and re-use of their cultural capital and strategically employ them in defining a new role for their cities backed up with policies for equitable and sustainable management of their heritage.

In this respect, it would be an injustice to expect that the synergy created by TAHTR to cure all the ills of the planning system and solve all the problems of heritage conservation. However, the positive impact it had on conservation policies within a very short duration of time can hardly be underestimated. TAHTR has created a significant impetus for a change in attitude towards heritage conservation and initiated an understanding that protection and development are not polar opposites, which itself is an important step forward.

<sup>1</sup> As of 2002 there were a total of 6812 sites under protection. The break down is as follows: 5278 of them were under protection as archeological sites; 831 were protected as sites with a natural value; 188 were protected urban sites; 125 of them were under protection for their historical value and there 390 sites which were under protection in more than one category cited above. In addition, as of 2002, there were a total of 45451 designated single buildings in the country. The inventory unfortunately is not complete yet; and the number of sites to be put under protection and the number of buildings yet to be registered out numbers the ones that are under protection at the moment. See: [kulturbakanligi.gov.tr](http://kulturbakanligi.gov.tr)

<sup>2</sup> The pioneering Malraux Act of 1962, which introduced the concept of 'Secteurs Sauvegardes in France; Civic Amenities Act of 1967, which introduced the definition of 'Conservation Areas' in England are some examples of the cases in point.

<sup>3</sup> The new law defined four categories of protected areas: urban, natural, historic, archeological.

<sup>4</sup> It is a Turkish proverb, which means 'what is old acquired a new value'

<sup>5</sup> A new tool devised to this end was the Act on the Promotion of Tourism, passed in 1982, and gave the central government the power to designate areas with natural, historical, archeological and socio-cultural values as 'Tourism Centers' and to determine all the development rights in these center by passing the local .

<sup>6</sup> An architect as well as a columnist in one of the well-known daily newspapers, O. Ekinçi has been a leading figure in the foundation of the TAHTR along with Prof. Metin Sozen. Currently as members of the advisory board of the TAHTR, they both have a great influence in the synergy created by the Association.

<sup>7</sup> Since the City of Bursa received the "European City" award in 1991, Municipality of Bursa was appointed as the representative of Turkey

<sup>8</sup> Erdoğan Bilenser (2003) 'Korumacılıkta Milat Olduk,' *Yerel Kimlik (Local Identity)* (Oct.-Dec.), No. 10, p. 107

<sup>9</sup> It is a motto stated by various people in almost every issue of the *Journal of Local Identity*, which is a publication of TAHTR seen akin to a 'log book.' See. Oktay Ekinçi (2001) 'Tarihi Kentlerin Seyir Defteri' (*Log Book of Historic Towns*) *Yerel Kimlik (Local Identity)* (July-Sept.) pp.2-3.

<sup>10</sup> 'İlköğretim Okulları ile Tarihi Kentler Birliği Projesi, Edirne-Kars Protokolü' (2003) *Yerel Kimlik (Local Identity)* (Jan.-March), pp: 42-43.

<sup>12</sup> Within the 3 year from its inauguration with 52 founding members in July 2002, the number of its members increased to 123 in September 2003.