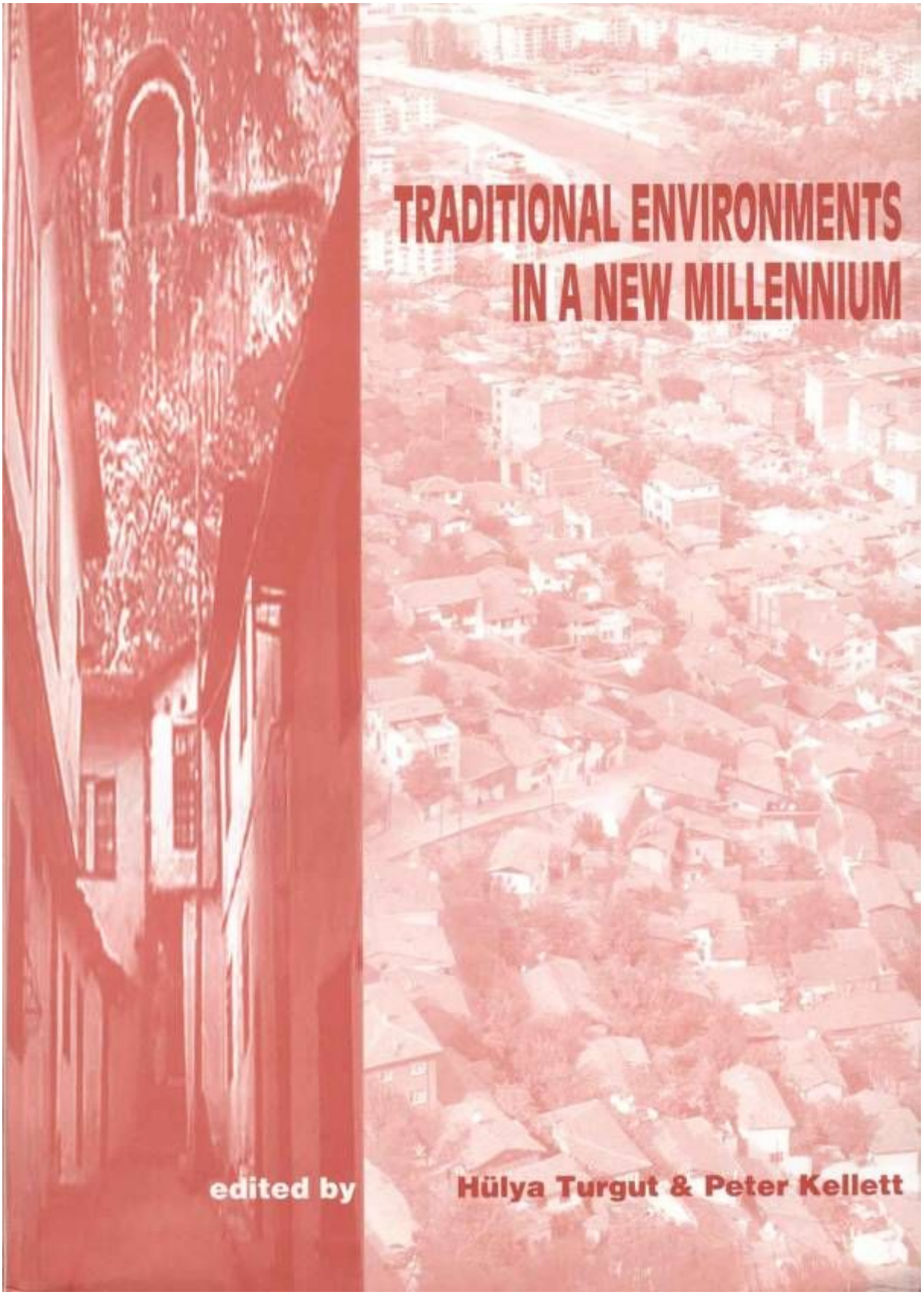

TRADITIONAL ENVIRONMENTS IN A NEW MILLENNIUM

edited by

Hülya Turgut & Peter Kellett

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A Macro Model Approach for the Rational Organization of Choosing and Improving the Traditional Environments in Turkey

Faruk Yalçın Uğurlu, Sumruhan Akcan

Çankaya University, Faculty of Engineering and Architecture

Abstract

Traditional environments in the new millennium are important bridges in connecting the past to the present. One important part of the cultural feed backs of a human brain comes from traditional culture-space studies. The role of this heritage for a country at a developing stage with a very rich historical background becomes crucially important for the future improvements, and Turkey is a great example. However, the drawback is to find the necessary amount of economical input for the conservation or revitalization of these environments. Apparently, economical shortages limit the number of projects that can be realized for each defined period and that is why it becomes inevitable to find some methodologies for limiting the expenses for each project. Moreover, the other factor is to design the projects according to their revenue potentials, so that each environment can properly function and create plus-values for the others.

In order to realize these presented goals, the existing discouraging factors, the future needs, and other influencing factors - such as human psychology or sociopolitical strategies - should be analyzed in a way that the essential synthesis for the new organization system could be achieved.

A new proposed model will construct an upper organization that acts as a bank, collecting all of the related information -national or international capitals - in one pool. The system may set the categorizing standardization to choose applicable projects, and mediate application decisions among the owner, designer, contractor, manager or even the users. This organization may find the creative designers through national or international competitions, finance the project, apply and control, and after all, choose the private professional managers according to scientific principles. With this model approach, it is hoped that; there will be no additional environmental pollution from untouched traditional environments. At each interval, the decisions on the number, capacity, and economic income-outcome systems of the projects may well be balanced within the economic resources of the country that is reserved for this process.

In Turkey, despite the professional planners, designers, restorers, and additional related staff potential, the necessary team studies for policy creations under the concept of scientific decisions still seem to be lacking. In addition, the rational organizations for multi-dimensional (historical, social, economical, etc..) productive traditional environments are not appropriately taking place. According to our conceptual model approach, we need to reconsider the notion of private ownership. Because of the improper functioning of the current committee of preservation, random plotting of the potential traditional environment - even without studying or researching in detail - tends to bring out a bulk of designated sites. This sort of a ranking and categorization creates a destructive impact on the owners, on the society, and on the bureaucratic organizations. That is why; the technicians usually have a tendency to break away from these types of organizations.

In conclusion; the related facts to the traditional environments can be listed as;

- Unifying the spatial organizations at any scale will be positive.
- Bringing out the factors of defining the over-all qualities of the traditional environment is necessary.
- With the re-definition of private ownership, we should try to create positive impacts for all of the partners.
- We should define the traditional and contemporary standards and boundaries.
- It is hoped that the creation of the new methodologies for the continuation of cultural heritage with the correlated responsibilities of the universities will be clearly understood.

Keywords: Re-Organization / Feasibility / Standardization / Ownership

Introduction

Do we need traditional impacts within the new living conditions and in the related new environments? Can we identify and rehabilitate these environments in a more rational way than the existing applied systems? Can there be any input of the design or the process of designing on this system?

We can ask many questions similar to the ones presented above. However, the idea here is to create a better con-

sciousness on the understanding of the traditional heritage and the impacts of this potential in perceiving the multi-sided improvements of any society. This study claims to present creative thoughts to discuss and develop practical solutions via the utilization of theoretical basis of the problem. The positive sides of team organizations held by different professionals in achieving multi-disciplinary application projects are known very well. In order to be successful in this teamwork process, the combining potential of design plays a very important role.

This study will define a design process of a new model approach towards the traditional environment. The aim of this study is to look at the traditional environment through different angles and via brainstorming, to catch possible applicable views. The important point to consider is that the goal is to achieve a better understanding between the disciplines that should work together for the awareness of a better standard of and learning of living with the traditional environment while conserving it for the future generations.

Definition of the Problem

Historical Background: A thousand of years of Turkish heritage is not a pure heritage of our own culture and does not only belong to us as Turks. It has been a strong synthesis of many cultures that have passed through this fertile and beautiful land. We conquered this land in 1071 as Turks but many tribes and cultures have influenced the cultural system that we should define as the "Anatolian Synthesis". Since we are in control of this piece of land we are the ones who must take the necessary precautions by organizing the new models for this heritage to be protected and carried out to future generations. There had been many attempts against the conservation of this heritage not only in the current era but also in the Ottoman Period.
A city is a continuously changing entity that tries to adapt itself according to the ever-changing requirements of the society in an appropriate way. In this process, the influence of the existing historical texture should be understood comprehensively. The life that the people were expecting to have needs to be integrated within the historical texture that is a part of the whole.

Some of the planning activities did not answer to the needs adequately, while some had a point of total destruction without the concern of the historical texture, which defines a character and an identity to the city. Some of the examples can be briefly listed as the 1948 plan of Kütahya, 1946-68 era plans of Nevşehir & Göynük, Edirne, Kütahya plans and more.

The later examples of planning strategies seem to be more respectful for the historical environment - taken as a part of the whole - that was in fact the core of the city, itself. These parts either worked as a landmark of the city, or gave birth to the city.

Present Situation and Future Expectations: All the problems are defined within a clear understanding of the consequences that bring out the problem. There are many consequences that create the problem of conservation of the historical environment related with the professionals and the policy of the government. The laws, rules, and regulations for an efficient conservation application do not exist throughout the country, as problematic applications and unsolved conflicts in the conservation policies prevent the professionals from acting adequately.
The "Law of Conservation of the Cultural and Natural Values" (No. 2863) has not been successful. Neither it is a leading piece that defines the problems, nor it gives exact solutions. In fact the law does not even define what a "cultural value" is, and not only the law lacks to provide the necessary solutions, it also does not define the problematic questions. The definition seems to include everything, leaving the door wide open in every aspect that can vary from one point of view to another. The team the law provides has very little to do with the appropriate technical staff which has to deal with the conservation problems, to form necessary information, and to provide control.

The other important factor is the growing population affecting the decay of such areas (Table 1). The analysis below is done within the last 20 years between 8 chosen cities.(ARÛ, 1998) Population growth leads to the decay of the traditional environment . So the traditional environment area (m^2) per person has decreased significantly during the last 40 years. (ARÛ, 1998) The population growth affects many other variables within the city so that there sources for the renewal and recreation of the city will be consumed by the population and a little will be left for the conservation of the traditional environment (Table 2).

Another problem are the "disciplinary wars". Serious conflicts occur because of diversified point of views of the different disciplines. In order to tackle the problems, coordination and collaboration is needed.

Although the institutes, government, and the universities try hard, they do not have the power to outplay the so-called "landlords". The land, because of rent, seems to have control over the agents. Money sometimes comes before the social values so that existing policies do not protect the heritage. The institutes, universities and the system of İller

Table 1. Population growth rate analysis .

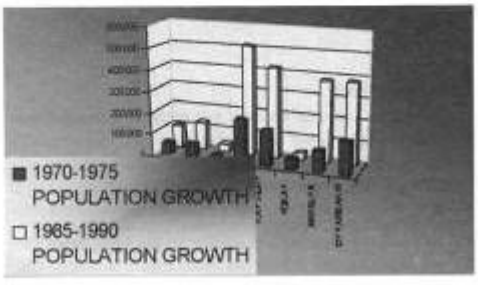
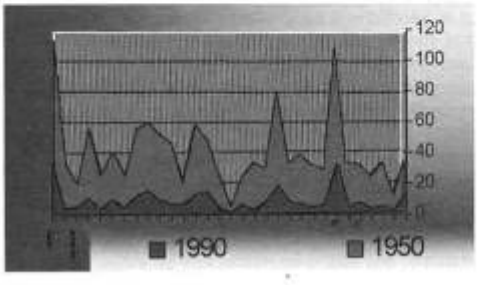


Table 2. Traditional environ(m^2) per person.



Bankasi is also unable to create new policies for conservation tied to the main law, "money rules". We need a more appropriate and efficient control and application mechanism, which will work within its own institutional rights working hand in hand with the government but not under the control of the government.

Developing countries have problems of application of certain rules to help implemenation as the new setting and approach rather than being only application policy. That is because the centralized system cannot localize and deeply explore the problem, which is why it takes years for a project even for to be accepted: leave aside the application.

Our country is in need of a synthesized lifestyle where the old and new elaborately integrate and state a new position, which defines the change of lifestyle and character within time, which will let out a new textural idea. In fact we need new ideas and a new understanding for the historical heritage.

New Definition of the Tradition

Tradition is not only a phenomenon or material that has been passed to us in time. Tradition is strongly bound and dependent on the behaviors of the people towards their environment, both traditional or not.

The behavior towards a mosque is not very different from a behavior towards a house in our country but these building types are not the only heritage we have. The good understanding of tradition lacks at this point. Usually, the term traditional is mistakenly used alternatively for the term "old". The new understanding of tradition should be considered as the integration of the old and the new, forming a different and richer environment by introducing the new tradition.

This new definition of tradition will be a new understanding of a new formation that is a transition between our heritage and the ones we are building to become a heritage for the future generations. So we should consider the value of the old, the new, and also their interaction as a transition designed to bring out a new statement.

We can also understand tradition by living in the traditional areas and benefiting from them. That would be an activity of reuse and re-functioning. We would not only benefit from the historical environment by using it in recreation, but we can use it as a school, as a hotel, as a domestic area, and many activities can be introduced with the help of a new perspective towards the traditional environment. Traditional Environment is the best means of education when we start exploring the design concept and adapt it to new generations while we benefit from the tourist means of the traditional environment. We can provide areas around the perimeter of the areas to be explored and not only tourists but also academics will be welcomed in such areas for investigating and applying onsite education. We can benefit from each and every means of the environment by adapting it in today's world.

SUMELA MONASTERY

The New Model

Our model not only points out the problems of the applications today but also brings out a solution. The solution that would start within the phase of education and develop toward the institutionalized system that works with competitions and project formations with the help of financiers from countries willing to work together with us for the conservation of the traditional environment.

Picture 1. Bird Eye view.

Plan

Section

Picture 2. Interior view.

Picture 3. Side view.

We should consider the traditional environments as a whole and should take them into application projects based on design. These projects should be open to all professionals willing to be involved during the phase of bringing out the project. All the professions should be financially supported to encourage them for their successive works. These supports will lead and encourage the disciplines for their future works too.

We are planning to form out an institute financed by a bank system that will work only for the financing of these activities and backed by countries willing to be involved in such activities. The institutes will not work in a very centralized manner while today's problems are occurring because of the centralized system where the local governments find themselves deserted and no answers seem to come for the questions they have. Also the local government systems are not able to fight against the land evaluation of the "landlords". So the laws must be re-designed for protecting the local activities instead of centralization.

The model does not only set forth the landowning system but also specifies another aspect of the problem that is finance. The financial part of the problem is not only based on the private ownership of the lands those are misused by the lacking protection of the law but also the lacking financial support of the government which has more important problems to deal with. But there is a solution to this problem, which is the privatization of the government institutes. The heritage within Türkiye is distributed between 3 groups, which are the Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Tourism and Department of Foundations. It is not clear how to distribute these values within such groups and so the control mechanism collapsed from the beginning. By a thorough inspection we can bring out specific areas to exemplify the whole within Türkiye (Figure 1). Instead of distributing we can keep them under one board and by doing so we can specifically define the possible outcomes of such environments. (rent ability, feasibility, conservation ability and etc.)

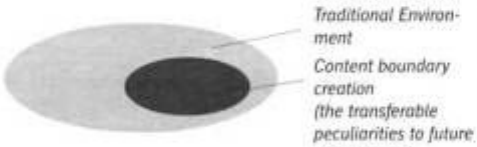


Figure 1. Minimization.

Positive Outcomes of the Proposed Model

In such a macro model we are sure that we are creating a truly new understanding of the traditional environment with a new perspective. To list some of the positive outcomes of our model approach we are sure that this model will broaden ideas and set forth some solid solutions with further studies.

- First of all this approach will bring out a new look towards our country with more respect and a new concept towards Türkiye. We accept that we need financial support or else it will be destroyed within a few decades.
- Secondly this is the first attempt toward finding a scientific identity as a new look towards the traditional environment. We are including and inviting all the universities and professionals from all kinds of disciplines to form a brand new institute to locally perform their work and inform all the people and create awareness towards our values.
- Thirdly as designers we are introducing the system basing it on the design principles while forming a new approach we are broadening the limits of the traditional environment and integrating it in today's world and functions.
- Finally we are thoroughly inspecting the rights and wrongs of today's governmental and institutional look towards the environmental system by looking deep into laws and rules. We are introducing a productive approach with a new approach towards land-ownership and asking help from private organizations (financiers) and the government to establish new rules towards privatization.

New Design Approaches to Diminish the Initial and Running Expenses

Since the very important factor in this approach is to conserve and give it to future generations; we should be aware that the running cost will be the most important factor. The heritage will be used for many purposes so the definition and the choices should be made before hand but since the adaptive re-use procedures will never stay the same we should provide long lasting, durable, low-cost materials and details. The modern era provides many opportunities in case of materials, details and labor so that we should be making use of it.

The important adhesive in such projects will be combining the factors above with good management skills so that the initial cost will not be as distinctive and the running cost will not affect the future users in an unbearable way. We have to use the efficient materials and techniques. We should be considering the price flows and inflation which will affect our application time, standards and policy. So we should apply the project with a clear awareness of time, material and labor.

New approach to education

The problematic point of the education in our country is it is neither active nor based on application. Students will be involved within a real activity of conservation from the beginning of the planning and design process until the final stage of the project. Usually the role of students is limited to giving and introducing different perspectives of ideas that will probably never used for the conservation or renovation of a specific area or a building. From the beginning students should be working as a group with their friends from other disciplines, form applicable ideas, and work with that project during the whole process under the control of their instructors.

Another development we should be bringing in the education is the localization and branch institutes working in their own areas. These institutes will be responsible for the education from the primary school to make the people understand and find out about the value of the areas they are living on. That is because this kind of project only works with the support of the people of that specific area and their awareness the value of the heritage.

To Run the New System; Creation of the Boundaries and Limitations of Private Ownership

The laws should state the important facts about landowning policy. The crucial point is that to take the rights of the lands from the owners is not appropriate. However, we should find ways to prevent the historical heritage from being destroyed by the owners because of insufficient regulations. The value of the lands in such places should be reduced to zero or at least there should be regulations stating, "Under no circumstances there can a building activity take place". The evaluation of landowning and the value of the land should be provided with the value on it. So as long as the piece of heritage on the land conserved protected and used the land will be powerfully valuable. As long as they know that their land will not mean anything without the traditional building, they would rather prefer to protect it and try to find the right actor/institution to help them.

Project Understanding

An important factor is understanding the boundaries and affects of the project for not only the designer but the observer, the user, the manager, the financier. As stated in Figure 2 the new approach to the system of project making and application would not be efficient unless we relate it to a specific environment that will understand and use the project.

would need ten or more times intense work and evaluation because their primary design does not belong to us. As designers we should invite other professions and people to get involved with the project so that we could bring out something right and efficient for the taste and use of the real owner; "the society" not only belong to us.

We should keep in mind that we do not own the building in any means of design unless we introduce a new perspective to that piece of work in the name of protecting it and making it more perceivable for the environment that it belongs.

Conclusion

It is never too late to make new decisions and find solutions. Centralizated control should be distributed into branch institutes so that we would save time and there would be a control mechanism in the local area led by the center.

We need appropriately educated leaders to deal with people for a more intensive understanding. In addition, we should start something new and begin to work together with as many disciplines as possible. Interdisciplinary work will help us to make better decisions, also will need the help of many other disciplines working together with us, like psychologists, anthropologists, archaeologists, historians, and etc. so that we would create a better understanding of the traditional environment. The last words of this presentation are:

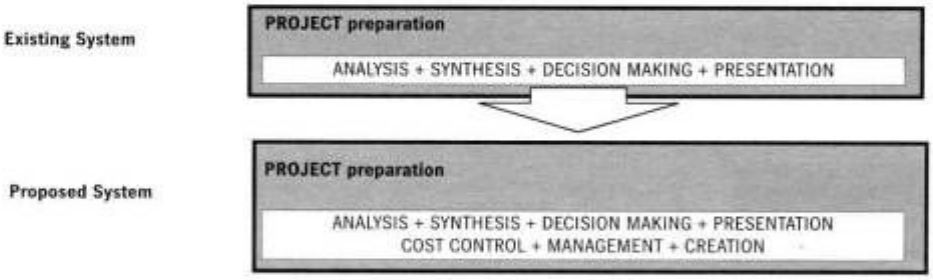
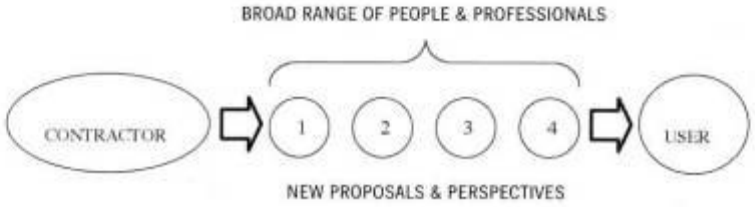


Figure 2. Evaluation of perspectives towards the project understanding.

Starting from the contractor towards the user we have a broad range of people and professionals other than the designer to propose ideas and new perspectives for project making (Figure 3). As designers we are very aware that the design without the comment of the user is sentenced to collapse in inefficiency. These kinds of very delicate projects

- The projects for the traditional environments, production process, methodologies, application strategies, etc. are all related and dependent upon bureaucratic stages. Duration lengths of projects approval stages should be shortened. Time consuming structure should be changed.

Figure 3. Project management in an efficient way.



- The projects should be planned as a total design project.
- The base of all of the related decisions should be economic. Project Teams should be sponsored. It must be understood that the economic inputs will immediately turn back as a very big economic outcome (revenue) to the system.
- Scientifically based rational selection systems should be functional in finding capable and responsible leaders, managers for efficient running.
- Cost-control, cost planning or cost-in use, etc. combined economical systems should be utilized during designing process.
- The new bank system must be under the control of national organizations.
- The proposed project competitions should have new running regulation systems.
- In order to be able to serve properly to the different people characteristics, macro - planning strategies for traditional environments should distribute balanced responsibilities to the related staffs.
- The necessary information, contemporary scientific knowledge or know-how about traditional environments in Turkey, must be collected, treated, prepared for researchers or designers as soon as possible.

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