

ABSTRACT

Historical cities are the cultural sites which carry the traces of the features of the former civilizations including social and economic structure, life philosophy, architectural style, mind of settlement and aesthetic sensitivity. In choosing a land for these cities; geographical location, social events and natural structures were determinant factors and different urban planning models have been emerged. In this paper, Iznik City (Bursa, Turkey) which is very significant center for religion tourism is investigated in terms of urban design of its historical structure. Iznik is in UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List since 2014. In this study, reflections of different civilizations hosting the city throughout the history and effects of changing social structure to the development of the city were studied. Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, Seljukian and Ottoman periods specific to military, political, cultural, religious, and economic development hosted by Iznik City has been demonstrated. The development of the city is discussed in the historical and spatial development process as urban landscape characters. In this context, the stages of the study consist of (i) historical and spatial development process of Iznik City, (ii) natural (topography, Iznik Lake, soil, geology and seismicity, climate) and social (religious factors, economy, social events, the art of tile-making) factors that affect historical urban landscape of Iznik, (iii) historical urban landscape features of Iznik, city plan, city walls and gates, current historical structures in the city as well as the Iznik Lake and the olive orchards that provide unity with the historical structure (iv) within this framework design strategies related with preservation-revitalization and tourism were developed towards the sustainability of urban cultural heritage. In this context, to evaluate the integrated planning and design work in urban scale relation with the pedestrian work with each other and the environment as well as the protection of urban structures and places in one building scale is important. Concurrently, as complemented historical pattern elements, Iznik Lake and olive groves are important outcomes of the study on handling within the entire historical urban landscape and on the evaluation within design strategies. Moreover, Iznik has a highly significant potential in terms of cultural tourism as a capital, a city of trade routes, a center of science and culture in addition to being a religious center in terms of religious tourism for Christians.