

# Landscape change and rural policy: An identity based approach to rural settlements

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## **Abstract:**

Rural landscapes have been changed significantly in recent years. Today, the process of this change becomes more visible than ever before with the increased effects on rural localities. Land transformation, changing agricultural practices, technological innovations, growing urban influence and changing global market are considered to be the main drivers of this change. These changes have been linked to environmental degradation and altered rural landscape character. Thus preserving rural characteristics and localities became an important topic at the governmental level as a part of rural development agenda.

There have been several studies concentrating on local characteristics of rural areas. As a part of this mainstream, identity based concepts have been investigated for the last few years to find plausible ways of approaching rural problems.

This paper offers an approach to understand spatial characteristics of landscape identity of rural settlements. With this respect, this paper focuses on Sirince (Izmir) Village, as its case study, which is analyzed through natural, built and socio-cultural characteristics. In the context of the research, Turkey's rural development strategy and its evolving body is discussed to find plausible ways of integrating identity based concepts into sustainable development plans. In relation to these, literature review, maps, and data collecting from site visits are utilized to frame the method of the research.

**Keywords:** *Rural policy, rural settlements, landscape identity, landscape change.*

## **1. Introduction**

Rural landscapes have been changed significantly in recent years. This change can be observed in social and physico-spatial composition of rural areas (Paquette & Domon 2003). This transformation can be represented as "landscape change". Landscape change, prescribes a situation, change of state of rural land by the effect of mostly urban and non-farming interest in rural places and associated lifestyles and it defines a process as well as an outcome that symbolizes the contemporary rural.

As the main drivers; increasing global competition in food markets, technological innovations, intensification in agricultural practices, growing effects of urbanization, demographic trends and reorientation of policy resulted in profound impacts on employment, environment and social dynamics (Van Eupen et al. 2012; Berkel & Verburg 2011; Antrop 2000). Traditional notion of rural environment replaced with the new rurality associated with new economic trends and diverse functions. New functions are now added to the traditional landscapes that lead the disappearance of valuable landscapes developed over centuries and raised the question how to accommodate new land uses in traditional landscapes (Vos & Meekes, 1999; Le-Du Blayo, 2011). Also, the mode of urbanization toward rural areas creates new rural typologies with different landscape structures and functions (urban center, urban fringe, the rural countryside of the urban network, the deep rural) and new spatiality between urban and rural character (Antrop, 2000). Land abandonment, depopulation and environmental degradation are the most prominent outcomes of this change with the growing effect on rural localities and altered rural character (Meeus et. al. 1990; Zimmermann 2006; Van Berkel & Verburg 2011).

As a part of wider rural context, rural settlements appeared as the most frugal areas effected from those forces at the first place. Rural settlements are concentrated in rural communities and are sparse in the environs (Neuman, 2000) which have developed over a period of time with different typologies. Rural settlements play crucial role to sustain local characteristics of rural areas with their vernacular structure, with its ongoing social and economic life based on local resources and traditions. However most of the decisions taken at the governmental level tend to ignore the local characteristics and local lifestyle. Therefore, the question of how the implication of public policies, economic pressures and environmental constrains at national and international level can be adapted into local context (Le du Blayo, 2011) gain importance that need to be answered.

As a response to the overall effect of all of those changes, preservation of rural characteristics and localities became an important topic at the governmental level as a part of rural development agenda. The new tendencies on rural areas lead conservation and management strategies to control pace of the change and propose scenarios for future developments. It is obvious that new tools are needed to plan and manage rural areas with proper methodology to sustain local features while promoting rural development.

There have been several studies concentrating on local characteristics of rural areas. As a part of this mainstream, identity based concepts have been investigated for the last few years to find plausible ways for approaching rural problems. But the number of studies that is mostly focused on spatiality of identity is limited with a few scholarly produced researches.

With this respect the aim of this study is to introduce an approach that is based on descriptive definition of landscape characteristics to identify landscape identity of rural settlements. Therefore, this paper focuses on Sirince (Izmir) Village, as its case study, which is analyzed through natural, built and socio-cultural characteristics. In the context of the research, Turkey's rural development strategy and its evolving body is discussed to integrate identity based concepts into sustainable development plans.

## **2. Rural policy and landscape identity**

Policy has dramatic effects on landscape by leading decisions that may have tangible results on landscape. With this respect development strategies appeared to be an effective way of controlling the pace of the change and setting the criteria to achieve conservation and management goals (Erdem & Dirik, 2012).

Landscape is currently gaining importance in the public and political debate. With this respect it has become an international policy instrument that has an impact on conservation and land use policy. It has been investigated for several years how landscape has become a source for international attention and how landscapes have seen both as a resource in its own right and as a means to achieve sustainable development. In this context, World Heritage Convention and the European Landscape Convention are two important actions that put landscape into public agenda with the emphasis on conservation of cultural landscapes as a source and a cultural heritage and set the goals for planning and management of European landscapes (Philips & Clarke, 2003). Thus understanding landscape characteristics, in other words the characteristic features of a specific landscape what makes it recognizable and different from other landscapes and definition of landscape quality and identity, have become one of the major concerns in Europe since mid twenties.

Until recent times, rural areas were in the agenda with undeveloped physical and social structure. This view led governments to shape their rural development strategies mainly focused on rural infrastructure, social welfare, education, health services and so on. But this view has just started to be changed into a more comprehensive framework in which landscape and environmental quality have become a strategy for sustainable development.

As in many countries Turkey's rural development strategy pay more attention to improvement of life conditions in rural areas from beginning of the first five years rural development strategy (1963-67) to the eight strategies (2002-2005). Providing rural infrastructures, increasing income level by promoting non-agricultural activities, creating community development model, eliminating dispersed character of rural settlements by proposing central village concept, land reforms, cooperative trading systems, educational programs, social-cultural development are defined as main strategic goals to improve life condition in rural areas. According to the strategies none of them had any statement concerning environment and landscape quality. But this view has just started to be changed with respect to the EU's policies on rural landscape.

The European Union's rural development strategy was focused on mainly agricultural development. The original focus was on supporting physical capital (investments) on the farm and in the downstream sector. Support for processing and marketing was intended to help the integration of food chain from production to through to marketing and contribute to the further improvement agricultural structures and of the competitiveness of the primary sector (European Commission, 2012).

The European Union Rural Development Policy (RDP) for the period 2007-2013 seeks to establish a coherent and sustainable framework for the future of Europe's rural areas and is closely related to the improvement of living conditions in the countryside involving aspects of housing, the environment,

infrastructure, communication, employment possibilities, land management etc. (European Communities Commission, 2007, Pasakarnis et.al., 2013).

Today, The European Council emphasizes the economic, environmental and social elements of sustainability with the following three major objectives for Rural Development policy that had been set for the period 2007-2013 (The EU Rural Development Policy 2007-2013);

- Increasing the competitiveness of the agricultural sector;
- Enhancing the environment and countryside through support for land management;
- Enhancing the quality of life in rural areas and promoting diversification of economic activities.

Diversity within rural regions is now integral to policy making, with a new focus on “places rather than sectors” (OECD, 2006). This is apparent in different European Union (EU) policies and strategies, for example, Rural Development Policy (2007-2013), the Community Strategic Guidelines for Rural Development (2007-2013), the EU Sustainable Development Strategy (2006), the Territorial Agenda (2007), the Fourth Report on Economic and Social Cohesion (2007), and the European Research Area Green Paper (2007). But it is stated that there is a new policy requirement for the definition of rural areas with regard to their specific attributes or characters. Their multidimensional nature requires a comprehensive analytic framework to analyze and evaluate multi-sectoral, place-based approaches (Eupen et al. 2012).

The rural development policies in Turkey focused on agricultural development for several years as in EU. The goals that have been put forward were limited with service providing activities to decrease differences between rural and urban areas. Compare with the former strategies, the 2007-2013 packet sets the goals by paying more attention to the environmental quality of rural settlements. Thus protection of natural areas, diversification in rural economy, promoting employment in non-agricultural sectors, social and physical rural infrastructure, education, local initiatives and inter-regional development differences become major topics in development strategy (Erbey et al. 2009; Aydemir, 2010). The 9<sup>th</sup> rural development strategy has gained importance for its new vision toward rural settlement. Therefore main aim is defined as development of life conditions and employment in rural areas with locally based strategies that are compatible with urban areas on the base of consideration of local potentials, local resources and preservation of natural and cultural assets (The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, 2011). In the strategy, the third strategic goal is defined as “improvement of amenities with proper infrastructures and improvement of life condition”. For this aim “development and preservation of rural settlements “were put into agenda with prospective aspects. With this respect, increase in quality of life in rural settlements and improvement of the aesthetic quality, development of sample models for production of standard housing which is compatible with the local ecology and local culture and which responds to the daily requirements of people with proper health conditions are defined as main goals. Furthermore, it is stated that priority must be given to the areas that have a potential to foster rural tourism. Also, it is stated that projects were going to be supported by the government for recovery of the physical qualities, appearance of rural settlements, that have an importance with its culture and architectural which need to be preserved, and restoration of buildings which have historical importance and adaptive

reuse of available buildings for tourism (The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of Turkey, 2011).

In the context of national development strategy, the aims that underlies the rural settlements are important for their emphasize on issues such as cultural heritage, aesthetic value, ecologic structure, the appearance of the settlements. But the aims that are related to landscape value and environmental relations are limited with a view that underscores the aesthetic and ecological aspects shows the lack of understanding toward landscape as a complex, living systems.

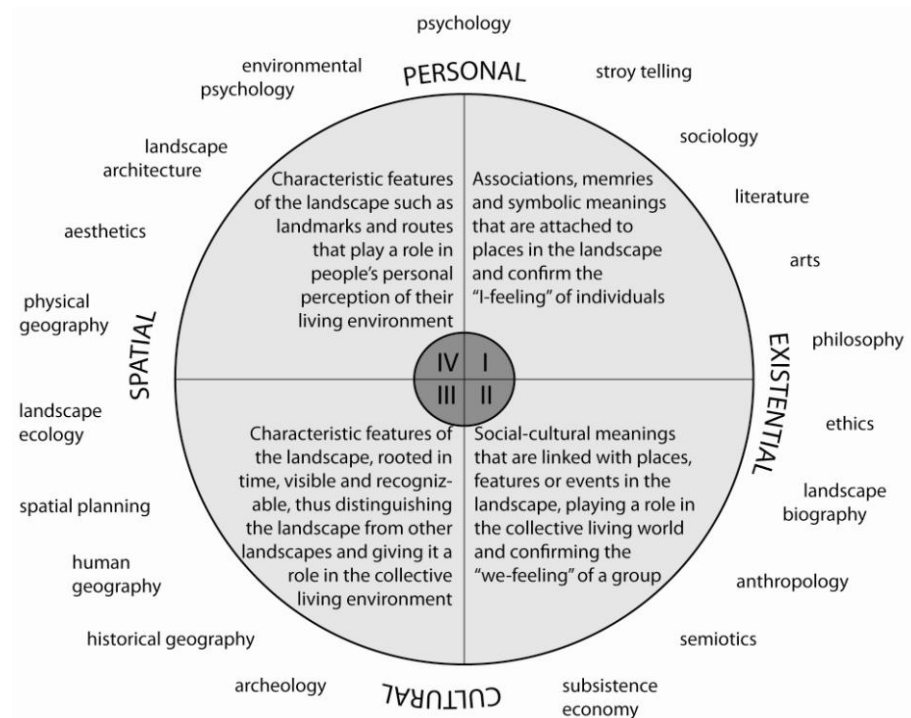
Although recent rural development strategy speaks more about the physical quality of rural settlements there is still an urgent need for a new approach to sustain local characteristics as a base of regional development. With the diverse topography depending on regional, ethnic and cultural diversity, rural settlements in Turkey have the potentials for development scenarios based on identity.

In the context of the political structuring, identity base concepts propose a suitable ground for creating sustainable framework for rural development. Here, definition of landscape play crucial role to understand the identity based concepts. According to European Landscape Convention landscape is defined as “an area, as perceived by people, the character of which is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors” (Url-1).

Landscape identity is a compelling theme for designers and planners thus understanding identity contribute considerably to generate more robust plan decisions. According to Stobellar and Pedroli (2011), landscape identity is defined as perceived uniqueness of a place. This definition underlines identity as a social and personal constructions what makes a landscape meaningful. With this respect, landscape identity can be read in a different ways. Stobellar and Pedroli (2011) offer four different ways of evaluating landscape identity namely; personal-existential landscape identity cultural – existential landscape identity, cultural-spatial landscape identity and personal spatial landscape identity (Figure 1). The concept is often used associated with a regions character, a historical event or to the perception of a specific group of people (Stobellar & Pedroli, 2011). Whatever the context is landscape identity unites inhabitants to each other or to the area and distinguishes them from inhabitants of another area (Haartsen et al., 2000).

The focus of this paper is spatial identity rather than existential identity. According to Stobellar and Pedroli (2011) cultural-spatial landscape identity can be characterized by features that distinguish one region from other. The focus is on features that can principally be perceived in the landscape by everyone, such as spatial composition, land use, wildlife, vegetation and minerals, the colors, forms and patterns and the use of building materials, etc. Here, landscape identity is defined as, characteristic features of the landscape, rooted in time, visible and recognizable, thus distinguishing the landscape from other landscapes and giving it a role in the collective living environment (Stobellar & Pedroli, 2011).

In this study landscape identity is defined as landscape developed over a period of time by the interaction of people with surrounding environment that lead the manipulation of the land with the purpose of production and living, with respect to the social and cultural settings.



**Figure 1.** The landscape identity circle (Stobellar & Pedroli, 2011).

Thus it is proposed that landscape identity of a rural settlement can be understood by looking three interrelated characteristics of a landscape namely; natural characteristics, built characteristics and socio-cultural characteristics (Erdem, 2012).

### 3. Methodology

In the context of the research a methodology is introduced to understand landscape characteristics of rural settlement. The methodology is based on descriptive assessment to understand the basic components of the landscape which defines a specific rural character. In the research a US based guideline for evaluating and documenting rural historic landscape, is used as a source to understand the key characteristics of a landscape. According to guideline National Register group the characteristics typical for rural historic landscapes into; process- land uses and activities, patterns of spatial organization, response to the natural environment and cultural traditions- and components- which include circulation networks, boundary demarcations, topography, vegetation, related land use, building, structures, and objects, clusters, archeological sites and small-scale elements (Url-2, Rottle 2008). In the light of the reference, the key features of a landscape are addressed according to their structure and their contribution to emergence of a describable landscape.

The methodology is based on description of the characteristics of landscape that defines a specific landscape identity. Therefore it is suggested that landscape identity of rural settlements is derived from natural, built and socio-cultural characteristics of the landscape (Erdem 2012). Grouping key characteristics into three broad topics will help us to create a systematic

framework to understand the reciprocal relations and the role of a component within landscape totality (Table 1).

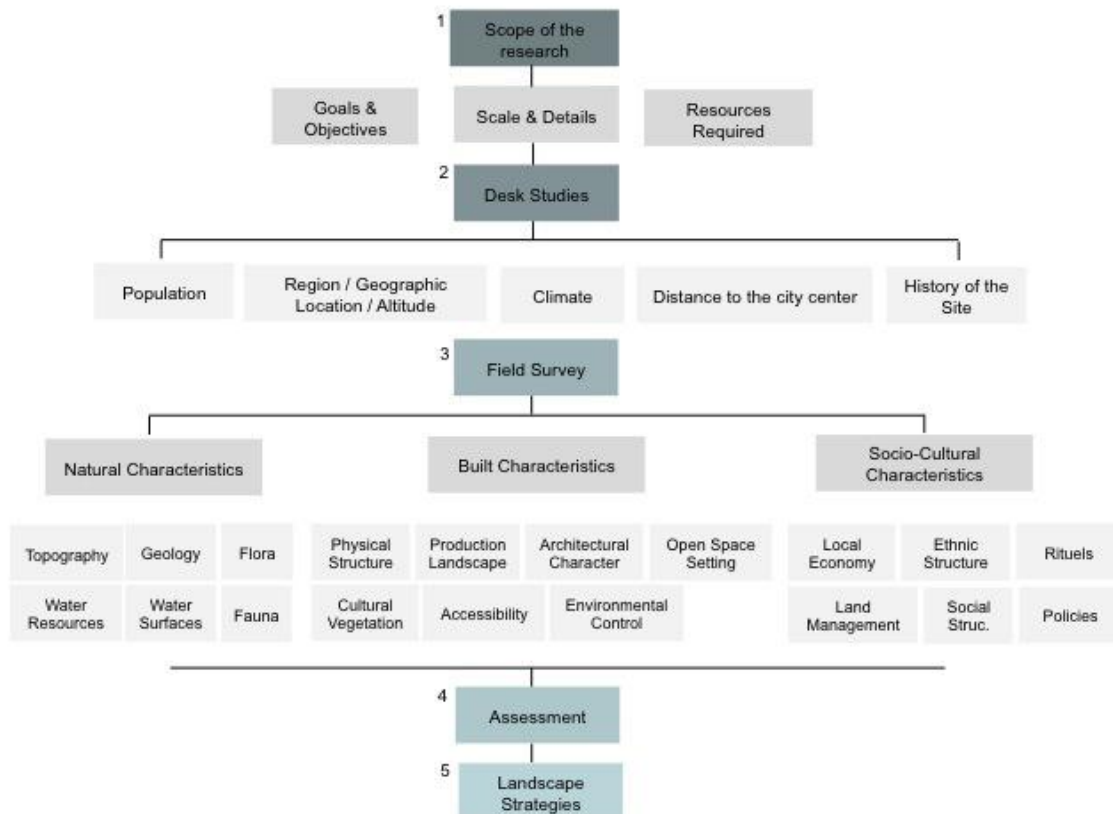
The aim of the research is to identify the key features /components of the landscape identity of Sirince Village and investigate how political decisions affect those features in good or bad terms and represents proposals/strategies to guide the plan decisions and protect the rural character.

For this purpose the research is undertaken at three level; the settlement scale, to understand the environmental relations, the site and the architectural scale.

The methodology of the study includes desk study and field survey. Desk study includes literature review and gathering information related to settlements such as population, geographical location, altitude, region, climate and historical past of the site.

Field study includes site visits to define the existing structure of landscape. With this respect, natural, built and socio-cultural characteristics are defined to understand the existing pattern of the settlement. According to the field study, the potentials to sustain the identity and threads on the identity, that lead the loss of vernacular character, are defined and strategies are proposed to sustain the vernacular landscape character of the village.

**Table 1.** *The methodology of the research (Erdem, 2012).*



#### **4. Case study: Sirince village**

Sirince village is a hilly settlement located on the Aegean region of Turkey with the population of 554 people (Url-3). The village has a history dated back to the 5th century (A.C). The village was founded by the immigrants who were settled down on the area which had experienced series of flood caused by Küçük Menderes River that made the area uncomfortable for living. Within the historical development process Sirince village was dominated by Greek population in 19th century with the population of 1800 people. In 1923, by the beginning of the massive migration movements between Greek and Turks, the majority of Greek population left their possessions therefore the village became a place of different culture group that led change in the population structure (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 1983).

In this paper landscape identity of Sirince Village in terms of natural, built and socio-cultural characteristics of landscape (Figure 2 and Table 2).

##### **4.1 Natural characteristics**

Natural characteristics that contribute to the landscape identity can be considered in terms of topography of the site, climate, geology, water surfaces, water resources and flora (Erdem, 2012). The village is a hilly settlement located on undulating topography that is 335 meter high from the sea level. Topographical structure is one of the major components of a landscape as a dominant feature that leads the emergence of the settlement pattern and creates a distinct character in terms of morphology and relation with surrounding environment. The prevailing climate type is Mediterranean characterized by hot-humid summers and mild-rainy winters. According to General Directorate of State Meteorology statistics the annual average temperature is 16.4 C° and annual average precipitation is 779 millimeter (Url-4). The geological formation of the site is characterized by metamorphic rocks including schist and clay slate (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 1983). Sirince stream is the main water surfaces that runs across the settlement and split it into two districts.

Spring water is used as potable water within the settlement. The vegetation pattern within and around the settlement includes scrub species, as well as pine trees, cypress trees and olive trees. Group of those species are dispersed through the undulating topography as the complement of the cultivated agricultural terraces.

##### **4.2 Built characteristics**

The built characteristics of the landscape identity can be analyzed in terms of morphology of the settlement, production landscape, architectural character, physical features (architecture), relation with the land, building type, construction materials, open space setting, open space components, street pattern, landscape elements, transportation, cultural vegetation and environmental control measures (Erdem, 2012).

The settlement has a compact morphology which is defined by building units located very close to each other and tinny street pattern. The production landscape as a dominant landscape feature was emerged as a result of cultivation of the land for viniculture and olive oil production. Thus vine yards, olive fields and terraces define a characteristic pattern within the settlement. Main building types of the settlement can be grouped into two type; residential units and public buildings. Therefore single residential units



defines the pattern by being on the private property whereas two Greek churches, vine plant, two olive oil plant, mosque and school are stand out as the main public building types within the settlement. Residential units are typical two story Ottoman houses with gardens. Houses are located either on the street or in a garden. Front facade of houses which are located on street are oriented through street whereas the facade of the houses which are located in a garden are opened directly to the garden. The ground level and the first floor of the houses are constructed with rubble stone; the second floor is constructed with lath and plaster. The building units in Istihlas district are located in a harmony with the inclined topography. The front facades of the houses are oriented through North.

Settlement has a typical street pattern. Streets are straight through east-west direction whereas in Istiklal district streets are oriented through north-south direction. Within the terraced like structure of the settlement, a housing unit is separated by a street from the roof and garden of another house which is located on lower level.

Wood, stone and tile are found as a major construction material within the settlement. Open spaces are defined by building units that are located close to each other. Gardens which are related to the building unit are typical for the settlement.

At the public scale the street- square relations define the open space system where as at the individual scale building units and its garden define this relation. Narrow streets are connected to each other with steps and ramps. Streets, Sirince square with a Plane tree, street bazaar, and residential gardens are the main components of the open space system. Narrow and meandering streets define an organic pattern within the settlement. Streets are covered with natural stone in Istihlas district whereas in Istiklal district granite is used as main pavement material. Stone walls, Plane tree and fountains are main landscape elements that contribute to the emergence of a characteristic pattern.

Accessibility is another important issue for the settlement. The settlement can be accessed by buses and automobiles by using the main road leading to the hill top. A huge parking lot is located at the periphery of the settlement serving as a station for the touristic buses. Vine yards and olive fields define cultural vegetation pattern in the settlement. Also frig, mulberry, pomegranate trees, peach, nerium, acacia are the main species, which are grown in the gardens, contribute to the cultural vegetation pattern of the settlement. As one of the environmental control measures, architectural restoration projects are the main manipulations done by private offices within the settlement.

#### **4.3 Socio-cultural characteristics**

The socio-cultural characteristics of the landscape can be analyzed through local economy, ethnic structure, rituals, land management type, social structure and management policies. The local economy is based on vinery, olive, olive oil production, orcharding, and crafts. The settlement is an immigrant village where the Turks from Salonica and Nomoz first settled down.





Table 2. Natural, built and socio-cultural characteristics of Sirince (Erdem & Dirik, 2012).

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|--|--|
| <div><div><div>Region: Aegean</div><div>Population: 534</div><div>Local Economy: Viticulture</div><div>Morphology: Compact</div><div>Theme: Vine Village</div></div></div> <div><p>General View</p></div>  |  |
| <div><p><b>Natural Characteristics</b></p><p>Natural characteristics that contribute to the vernacular landscape can be considered in terms of topography of the site, climate, geology, water surfaces, water resources and flora (Erdem 2012). The village is a hilly settlement located on undulating topography 335m above the sea level. The prevailing climate type is Mediterranean characterized by hot-humid summers and mild-rainy winters. According to General Directorate of State Meteorology statistics the annual average temperature is 16.4 C° and annual average precipitation is 779 mm (DMG). The vegetation pattern in and around the settlement include scrub species, as well as pine trees, cypress trees and olive trees. Group of those species dispersed through the undulating topography as the complement of the cultivated agricultural terraces. Vegetation patterns created by cypress, olive, pine and poplar trees dispersed on undulating topography with small groups.</p></div> <div></div> | <div><p><b>Built Characteristics</b></p><p>The settlement has a compact morphology which is defined by building units located very close to each other and tiny street pattern. The production landscape as a dominant landscape feature is a result of a cultivation of the land for viticulture and olive oil production. Two storey houses with gardens and courtyards are characteristic for the settlement. Narrow and inclined street pattern. Open space system based on street life and street square relations. Street bazaar which is covered with overhang structures. Gardens are surrounded by stone walls.</p></div> <div></div>  |
| <div><p><b>Built Characteristics</b></p></div> <div></div>   | <div><p><b>Socio-Cultural Characteristics</b></p><p>The local economy is based on vinery, olive, olive oil production, orcharding, and crafts. The settlement is an immigrant village where the Turks from Salonica and Nomoz first settled down. Wedding ceremonies and circumcision are the main traditional activities that are celebrated by local people. Private land ownership is the common land management type within the settlement. The social life is based on family and neighborhood life. The village is declared as Urban Conservation Area in 1984 and as a Cultural Asset in 1989. The boundaries of urban conservation area enlarged in 1997 and the surrounding area is declared as Third Degree Natural Conservation Area.</p></div> <div></div> |

Wedding ceremonies and circumcision are the main traditional activities that are celebrated by local people. Private land ownership is the common land management type within the settlement. The social life is based on family and neighborhood life. Compact morphology of Sirince village is the result of collective social life and segregation of the agricultural fields and living areas. The close location of building units define a narrow street systems with squares underlies the importance of open spaces as an indicator of public life.

### **5. The change: Political implementation and landscape**

Sirince village was declared as Urban Conservation Area in 1984 and as a Cultural Asset in 1989 with its distinctive landscape quality and vernacular life-style. The boundaries of urban conservation area were enlarged in 1997 and the surrounding area was declared as Third Degree Natural Conservation Area. The first conservation plan in 1984 had mostly focused on the preservation of the cultural monuments such as buildings or fountains whereas the following plans had considered the value of the landscape as a cultural and ecological heritage to conserve.

However, this plan lasted until 1997 and suspended for damaging the historical structure (Semenderoglu & Oban 2007). In 2004, 112 residential building, 2 historic fountains, 2 vine houses, 2 churches, a store, a restaurant, a security building, an olive oil plant and a coffee shop were registered. The conservation plan for Sirince village was enacted in 2007. In the context of the plan the destruction decision of 22 buildings were officially passed but this had never been proceeded.

The plan proposed a land-use change by transforming the olive field, which is located on the east periphery of the settlement, into a residential area by constructing 152 new building. In 2008, the plan was cancelled upon the reaction of the local people (Url-5).

Another important implementation that opened the way of change in the settlement is appeared as the ecological tourism strategy of the government. With its natural landscape quality, built characteristics and its cultural landscape Sirince had become a popular tourism destination in the countrywide. With the ecological tourism approach, the village has witnessed varieties of changes such as the changes in the population, and changes in the economic resources. Even though, the historic village had based its economy on the agriculture for long decades, the transition from this cultural asset to the tourism approach of today made people leave their farm tradition and turn to touristic attractions. This major change affected the life style of the localities, as well as the social-economical balance of the community (Pehlivanian, 1993).

With its landscape quality, the settlement attracts massive numbers of visitors which is incompatible with the scale of the village. Thus, the calm atmosphere of this hilly village disappeared. Most of the registered buildings are now converted into pensions that are managed by companies and families as well. The conservation policies allow to transformation of the registered buildings into a touristic accommodation. The interventions made by the owner of the pensions lead the appearance of a landscape which is not compatible with the existing local site characteristics. Especially landscape design implementations appeared to be the most effective

interventions that lead the deterioration of the existing identity by introducing exotic spaces and design language.

Due to the gaps in the first plan, Ministry of Culture and Tourism prepared another plan for conservation and development of Sirince Village. The plan was officially authorized by the Izmir City Council in 11.04.2007, and aimed to conserve the historic, natural, architectural, cultural, and economic values. Also development compatible with contemporary lifestyles, documentation of outstanding cultural and natural values, and improvement of the existing settlement pattern, creating a balance between conservation and usage, and finally the increase of quality of life in the village were aimed at this plan (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2007).

The former plans obviously showed the lack of understanding of landscape as valuable cultural and natural assets that lead the initiatives who are willing to take the advantage of the uncertain conditions of the policy by implementing their projects which are not sensitive to the existing nature and scale of Sirince. Plan decision enacted in 07.10.2009 with the number 386 was proceeded after the recognition of this gap between policy and plan decision. With this decision, it had been clarified the need of changes in the report of the Commission of Public Works of Izmir Municipality. The decision has proposed the change of the conservation plan since the settlements were suited in an area which has traditional agricultural features, and olive trees.

## **6. Conclusion and discussions**

Identity based concepts have become a part of sustainable development strategies in Europe since mid-twenties. Rural development strategies are appeared to be the most effective tool for land management from site scale to regional scale. With diverse topography Turkey's rural areas propose suitable ground for identity based development concepts. But it is obvious that there is lack of understanding of landscape based strategies and its power to reflect the real potentials of the rural areas.

Sirince Village is a tangible example of how policy effects and changes the landscape identity. In the light of the discussions, the village is analyzed through key characteristics of identity; natural characteristics, built characteristics and socio-cultural characteristics. Sirince village has long established tradition on viniculture that leads the emergence of vine fields. It has a strong thematic representation gained through combination of agricultural production and associated services (vine plant, vine houses, olive oil plant) that make the settlement attractive for tourism as a vine village. Compact morphology of Sirince village is the result of collective social life and segregation of the agricultural fields and living areas. The close location of building units define a narrow street systems with squares underlies the importance of open spaces as an indicator of public life.

Political decisions taken for the village obviously produced without paying any attention to the social life and dynamic. The outcome of this process would weaken the landscape identity as a whole.

It is obvious that identity based approaches can be an effective tool to understand the site characteristics and to manage the land from site scale to regional scale. It shouldn't be forgotten that rural settlements are primary

catalyst of broader rural systems with production systems, local economy, unique socio-cultural structure and vernacular lifestyle. Thus identity based concepts are appeared to be the best way to promote scenarios for sustainable development. Thus in the context of the study it is proposed that;

- Precautionary measures should be taken by local authorities by paying more attention to landscape identity
- Concept of landscape identity need to be defined clearly in the legal planning legislation
- Landscape design guidelines for rural settlements may help to sustain the local characteristics. For this aim detailed research should be carried out by interdisciplinary teams as well as with the participation of local communities.
- Rural community need to be informed about the environment that they have been living and working and about the overall effect of their interventions toward landscape.
- Landscape identity need to be specified as a goal in the national rural development strategies as a part of sustainable rural development.

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### **Peyzaj deęişimleri ve kırsal politika: Kırsal yerleşimlere yönelik kimlik temelli bir yaklaşım önerisi**

Kırsal peyzajlar son dönemlerde önemli bir deęişim süreci içerisine girmiştir. Kırsal alanların sosyal ve fiziksel yapıları üzerinde önemli deęişimlere neden olan bu süreç, günümüzde geçmiş dönemlerde hiç olmadığı kadar gözlemlenebilir bir hale gelmiştir (Paquette Domon 2003). Söz konusu deęişim sürecini “peyzaj deęişimleri” olarak temsil etmek mümkündür. Peyzaj deęişimleri, daha çok kentsel ve tarımsal olmayan pratiklerin ve yaşam şeklinin etkisi ile kırsal alanlarda gözlemlenen deęişim durumunu ifade etmekte ve hem bir süreci etmekte hem de çağdaş kırsalı sembolize eden bir ürün olarak deęerlendirilmektedir.

Arazi dönüşümleri, tarımsal uygulamalarda gözlemlenen yoğunlaşma, demografik hareketler, teknolojik buluşlar, gittikçe artan kentleşme baskısı, odak deęiştiren politikalar ve deęişen küresel piyasa arayışları söz konusu deęişim sürecini tetikleyen ve iş olanakları, çevre ve sosyal dinamikler üzerinde ciddi etkiler yaratan katalizörler olarak belirginleşmektedir (Van Eupen et al. 2012; Berkel & Verburg 2011; Antrop 2000).

Kırsal çevreye yönelik gelişen geleneksel algı yerini yeni ekonomilere ve çeşitli işlevlerle ilişkilendirilen yeni kırsallığa bırakmıştır. Geleneksel peyzajlar üzerinde gelişen yeni işlevler, geçmişten günümüze kadar olan süreçte gelişmiş olan deęerli peyzajların kaybolmasına yol açmakta ve yeni alan kullanımları geleneksel peyzajlara nasıl adapte edilebileceęi sorusunu gündeme getirmektedir (Vos & Meekes, 1999; Le-DuBlayo, 2011).

Aynı zamanda kırsal alanları da etkisi altına alan kentleşme dinamikleri, kent ve kır arasında gelişen ve kent merkezi, kent çeperi, kent ağının kırsal alanları ve uzak kırsal alanlar olmak üzere belirginleşen yeni mekan tipolojilerini gündeme getirmektedir (Antrop 2000). Bu deęişimin en belirgin sonuçları olarak arazi boşalması, kırsal nüfusta azalma ve çevresel bozulma ve kırsal karakterin deęişimi bu sürecin en belirgin sonuçları olarak gösterilebilir (Meeus et. al. 1990; Zimmermann 2006; Van Berkel & Verburg 2011).

Söz konusu deęişim süreçleri karşısında, kırsal alanlara özgü olan karakteristiklerin ve yerelliklerin korunması ve devamlılıęının sağlanması, kırsal kalkınma kapsamında, hükümetlerce üzerinde en çok tartışılan konulardan biri haline gelmiştir.

Verneküler yapıları ve yerel kaynaklara ve geleneklere dayalı sosyal ve ekonomik yaşantıları ile kırsal yerleşimler, yerel niteliklerin süreklilięinin sağlanmasında öncelikli bir role sahiptir. Ancak, hükümet düzeyinde alınan birçok karar merkezi nitelikli olmakla birlikte üretilen yaklaşımlar yerel nitelikleri ve yaşam biçimlerini göz ardı etme eğilimindedir. Bu nedenle, kamu politikalarının, ekonomik baskıların ve çevresel sınırlayıcıların ulusal ve uluslararası seviyede yerel içeriklere nasıl adapte edilebileceęi önem kazanmaktadır (Le duBlayo, 2011) .

Kırsal alanlar üzerine gelişen yeni eğilimler, deęişimin hızını kontrol etmek ve gelecekte gerçekleşecek gelişim senaryolarını yönlendirmek üzere koruma ve yönetim stratejilerini gündeme getirmektedir. Ancak, yerel karakteristiklerin korunması, devamlılıęının sağlanması ve aynı zamanda kırsal gelişim desteklenmesi için kırsal alanların uygun metodolojilerle planlanması ve yönetilmesi için yeni araçlara ihtiyaç olduğu açıktır.

Kırsal alanların yerel karakteristiklerine odaklanan birçok araştırma mevcuttur. Bu dalgalanın bir parçası olarak kimlik temelli kavramlar, kırsal problemlere makul çözümler üretebilmek adına, sadece son bir kaç yıl içinde araştırılmaya başlanmıştır. Ancak kimlięin mekânsal boyutuna odaklanan çalışmaların sayısı oldukça azdır. Bu araştırmanın amacı, kırsal yerleşimlerin peyzaj kimliklerinin tanımlanmasına hizmet edecek yeni bir yaklaşımı tanıtmaktadır.



Bu kapsamda araştırma çalışma alanı olarak Sirince Köyü'ne odaklanmaktadır. Araştırmada kullanılan metodoloji peyzaj kimliğinin, kimliği tanımlayan doğal, yapma ve sosyo-kültürel bileşenler doğrultusunda anlaşılabilmesi önerisinden hareketle (Erdem, 2012), söz konusu kimlik bileşenlerinin arazi üzerindeki tespitler doğrultusunda tanımlanmasına dayanmaktadır. Araştırmanın kapsamı, kırsal politika ve peyzaj kimliği arasındaki ilişkiler, peyzaj kavramının yeni açılımları ile birlikte kimlik temelli yaklaşımlar için sunduğu fırsatların anlaşılması ve alınan politik kararların peyzaj kimliği üzerindeki etkilerinin net bir şekilde değerlendirilebileceği bir örnek olarak Sirince Köyü'nün peyzaj kimlik analizini içermektedir. Bu kapsamda, kırsal politika ve peyzaj kimliği arasındaki ilişkilerin anlaşılabilmesi için Avrupa Birliği'nin kırsal kalkınma politikası ve Türkiye üzerindeki etkileri tartışılmış ve Türkiye'nin kırsal kalkınma politikası içerisinde kırsal yerleşimlere yönelik geliştirilen ilke kararları incelenmiş ve Türkiye'nin peyzaj kimliği odaklı yaklaşımlar için barındırdığı kırsal çeşitlilik ile birlikte uygun bir altyapı sunduğu tartışılmıştır.

Söz konusu yaklaşımların, doğru bir şekilde geliştirilebilmesinin ancak "peyzaj" kavramının güncel açılımları ile değerlendirilmesi ile gerçekçi olabileceği tartışılmıştır. Bu kapsamda Sirince Köyü peyzaj kimlik bileşenleri, tüm bileşenleri içeren peyzaj kimlik anket formu doğrultusunda değerlendirilmiş ve kimlik üzerinde olumsuz etki yapan faktörler belirlenmiştir.

Söz konusu süreci yönlendiren araştırma metodolojisi, araştırmanın amaç, kapsam, ölçek ve detay seviyesinin belirlenmesi ile başlayan ve alana ilişkin temel bilgilerin sağlanmasına (nüfus, rakım, iklim, tarihi geçmiş, kent merkezine uzaklık) dayanan ofis çalışmalarını, oluşturulan anket formunun arazi üzerinde doldurulmasını kapsayan alan çalışmalarını ve elde edilen verilerin değerlendirilmesini ve yapılan tespitler doğrultusunda Sirince Köyü peyzaj kimlik özelliklerinin korunması ve geliştirilmesi için alınacak kararları yönlendirici olması bakımından önem taşıyan peyzaj stratejilerinin önerilmesini içermektedir. Bu kapsamda metodoloji literatür taraması, haritaların ve verilerin toplanması ve alan çalışmalarını içeren tanımlayıcı bir süreci içermektedir.

Araştırmada politikalar ve peyzaj üzerindeki etkileri Sirince Köyü üzerinden tartışılmaktadır. Araştırmanın sonuç kısmında kimlik temelli yaklaşımların sürdürülebilir gelişim açısından sunduğu potansiyeller yerellik kapsamında değerlendirilmekte ve kırsal yerleşimlere odaklanan müdahaleleri yönlendirici olması bakımında öneriler sunulmaktadır.

Araştırmada tanıtılan ve peyzaj kimlik özelliklerini temel alan yaklaşım, kırsal yerleşimlerin kimliğinin korunması ve geliştirilmesi adına alınacak planlama ve tasarım kararlarını yönlendirici olması adına kullanılabilecek bir araç olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Günümüzde yerleşimlerin karşılaştığı kimlik probleminin kırsal alanlar üzerindeki etkilerinin minimize edilmesi ve yerel değerlerin korunması adına alınacak kararların önemi gün geçtikçe önem kazanmaktadır. Herhangi bir plana bağlı kalmaksızın, içerisinde bulundukları kırsal çevrenin bir parçası olarak doğal özellikleri ile var olan kırsal yerleşimler, bu yapıya adapte olan üretim ve yapım teknikleri ve geleneksel yaşam şeklinin tanımladığı özgün peyzaj değerlerine sahiptir (Erdem 2012). Bu bakımdan kimlik sorunu kentsel çevrelerden çok daha ciddi boyutlarda kırsal yerleşimler için tartışılması gereken önemli bir problem alanı haline gelmiştir.

Bu gerçekten hareketle araştırma kapsamında; yerel otoritelerin peyzaj kimliği kavramı doğrultusunda bir takım kararlar alması gerekliliği, yasal planlama sistemi içerisinde peyzaj kimliği kavramının açık bir şekilde tanımlanması gerektiği, kırsal yerleşimlerin peyzaj kimliğinin korunması ve devamlılığının sağlanmasına yönelik peyzaj tasarım rehberlerinin geliştirilebileceği, bu amaç için disiplinler arası çalışma ekipleri tarafından yerel halkında içinde olacağı detaylı araştırmaların yapılması, kırsal toplulukların içerisinde yaşadıkları çevre ile ilgili olarak bilgilendirilmesi ve bireysel kararlarının peyzaj kimliği üzerindeki etkilerinin neler olabileceğinin anlatılması ve peyzaj kimliğinin sürdürülebilir kırsal kalkınmanın bir parçası olarak ulusal kalkınma stratejisinde bir hedef olarak belirlenmesi gerekliliği vurgulanmaktadır.