Cultural Heritage Landscape conservation in the context of Sustainable Spatial Settings

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Case Study: Region OfAbyanehvillage, Kashan, Iran

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ABSTRACT : Cultural heritage landscapes present historical and cultural civilization signs and legacies in its particular environment and landscape which considered today as a necessary incentive to attract cultural tourists. This study aims to provide a conceptual analysis of cultural heritage and how they are linked to the concepts of landscape, heritage and identity. It discusses how these cultural landscapes can be assessed and integrated into spatial and physical planning. Cultural heritage conservation provides tools for reaching suitable solutions for sustainable development based on tourism. A region of central districts in Iran especially villages that is linked to landscapes like Abyaneh, as one of famous spectacular cultural landscapes that express historical values and ecosystem.

Keywords : Cultural landscapes , heritage , sustainable development , Abyaneh

INTRODUCTION

The cultural landscape is a spatial form and the physical settings of the built environment which has been shaped and created by the common believe and activities of a particular society. It comprises both the built- and natural-environment which need to be studied simultaneously in the research procedure. It also comprises the dimension of spatial and temporal aspects in the settlement establishment process. (Rapoport 1969, 1990). The revelation of the social and behavioral significance of societal identity and way of life in the past was crucial to the explanation of the current cultural and social dynamic. Study on cultural landscape thus help enhance the decision making process for future urban development planning by means of explanation of the local lifestyle and the pattern of cultural attribute which change the physical settings of the local area. One of the main messages in the Millennium Assessment (MA) related to cultural and amenity services is that human cultures, knowledge systems, religions, heritage values, social interactions and the linked amenity services always have been influenced and shaped by the nature of the ecosystems and ecosystem conditions in which culture is based. At the same time, people have always influenced and shaped the environment to enhance the availability of certain valued services. MA recognizes that it is artificial to separate these services or their combined influence on human well-being, but identifies six categories of cultural and amenity services provided by ecosystems and landscapes in order to facilitate valuation (MA, 2005). Heritage values and cultural identity are two of the six categories of cultural landscape services that recognized by many assessment, the others being: spiritual services (sacred, religious, or other forms of spiritual inspiration derived from ecosystems); inspiration (use of natural motives or artifacts in art, folklore, etc. aesthetic appreciation of natural and cultivated landscapes; and, recreation and tourism. Historical villages
are one of most nominees to being presented a whole cultural landscape to region and when these kind of setting have a particular architecture, texture, lifestyle and etc. and located in the special situation of the period of time so this cultural landscape is known as heritage.

**Cultural Heritage Landscape**

A cultural landscape is a physical representation of how humans have related to, and transformed their environment; it highlights the significance in building form, natural features, and the interaction between the two. The concept of cultural landscapes is a broad one, and when applied to the Region of village more cultural landscapes are found than not. “It is proper and important to think of cultural landscapes as nearly everything we see when we go outdoors. This becomes problematic when trying to identify and protect these features. A more narrow view of the concept is needed, and that could be assumed through the additional stipulation of time. A cultural heritage landscape will for the purpose of this paper and the work of the Region.

represent the same concept as a cultural landscape but with the qualifying function of time. We enrich our knowledge base by identifying and examining the cultural landscapes in our Region, those significant in their own right, and those significant by association (lands surrounding heritage buildings or artifacts). No cultural heritage object can be understood without taking the surrounding landscape into account, by studying an entire cultural heritage landscape, socio-cultural patterns can be discerned, such as how structures were placed in the landscape, areas where optimal protection from natural elements are located, or where the food and the essentials of life were once in abundance (Boehler, Scherer, Siebold, Mainz, 2002).

**Definitions**

The first step in the process of identifying and protecting cultural heritage landscapes is to implement a justifiable working definition of what a cultural landscape is too mean to the Region of study cases. There are many examples of definitions completed by various municipalities, agencies, and international groups these definitions outline the terms Cultural Heritage Landscape and Cultural Landscape, however most times the terms are interchangeable. The Region of Abyanehmight find it of value to develop a detailed cultural heritage landscape definition unique to the Region, or simply adopt/adapt an existing definition. The definitions is depends on landscape unique features that was presented to ecosystems and humankind into many years.

**Policy Statement Definition of Cultural Landscapes**

The only definition [of cultural heritage landscapes] approaching official status is contained in the Provincial Policy Statement, but fails to capture the richness of the concept.” (Reeves, 2001, p. 30). Despite this, the Region of Abyaneh should refer to the definition set out in the PPS. It is a valuable starting point for an agency with little experience in the identification of such features, and will hold some weight when educating stakeholders and the public.

The definition is as follows that Cultural heritage landscape means a defined geographical area of heritage significance which has been modified by human activities. Such an area is valued by a community, and is of significance to the understanding of the history of a person or place.

**Other Definitions in Cultural Heritage Conservation**

Cultural [heritage] landscapes in the United States enjoy a much higher profile than that of Canada, thanks to a national legislative mandate and implementing programs. Leadership is provided by the National Park Service (NPS) a unit of the Department of the Interior. The guidance offered by the NPS has clarified and defined many elusive concepts related to cultural heritage conservation (NPS, 1996).

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1 Projects for public spaces
Cultural heritage and Landscape identity

Cultural heritage values and identity are important aspects of cultural and amenity services as a whole, implying the non-material benefits people obtain from ecosystems through: spiritual enrichment; cognitive, emotional and social development; reflection; recreation; and, aesthetic experiences. (MA, 2005).

The main subject in definition or analyzing this kind of landscapes that conclude the cultural ecosystem with Urbanism and own architecture and lifestyle is how can evaluation main matters in a large period of time. Cultural heritage values are put forth within the MA as an important factor to consider within an ecosystem management due to the fact that many societies place high value in the maintenance of either historically important landscapes (cultural landscapes) or culturally significant species. MA refers to heritage values mainly as special or historic features within a landscape that remind us of our collective and individual roots, providing a sense of continuity and understanding of our place in our natural and cultural environment. Heritage is thus conceptualized as landscape-related “memories” from past cultural ties, mainly expressed through characteristics within cultural landscapes (MA, 2005). Within contemporary theory of conservation, cultural heritage is a broad and complex term, revealed in a global context by the evolving, more inclusive and integrated interpretation of the heritage concept within the World Heritage Convention in the last 30 years (Jokilehto and Cameron, 2008). Heritage can be understood as physical objects or places, something that has been passed on from generation to generation. Heritage also incorporates various practices and intangible aspects such as language or cultural behavior in a broader sense. This also incorporates ways to go about conserving things and choices we make about what to remember and what to forget, often in the light of a potential threat and in relation to future generations (Harrison, 2010). Cultural heritage is thus not only what former generations built up but also the way it is interpreted, valued and managed by contemporary society in our everyday life. Historical artifacts and the way practices are connected to historic features within landscapes are considered as heritage because we attribute values to them (Munoz Vinhas, 2005). Cultural heritage is therefore not static but is constantly changing and re-evaluated, interpreted in various ways by different actors. By cultural identity, the MA refers to the current cultural linkage between humans and their environment (MA, 2005). Cultural diversity is dependent on a diversity of contemporary landscapes, generating place specific languages and traditional knowledge systems. Within contemporary psychology, cultural identity refers to the individual’s sense of self as related to a range of social and interpersonal links and roles. According to Triandis (1994), the culture is to society what memory is for individuals. In other words, culture includes traditions that tell what has worked in the past. It also encompasses the way people have learned to look at their environment and themselves, indicating a linkage between humans and their landscape. We stay alive by anchoring our existence to places, as pointed out by Casey (1993). A place and a landscape related memory has also been shown to comprise both personal (Taylor, 2010; Knez, 2006, in press) and collective information (Lewicka, 2008).

We suggest a definition of cultural heritage as being featured within landscapes significant in some way to the present, including not only historical objects or landscape features (cultural and natural) but also intangible aspects such as stories, knowledge systems and traditions, implying that an inclusive approach is crucial for sustainable management of landscapes. Both tangible and intangible heritage within the landscape help to maintain meanings and a sense of collective identity, emphasizing the intimate linkage between cultural heritage and identity. At the result of that we have different aspects of spatial features that contained aspects of physical-cultural interactions, namely, contextual aspects of social change; cultural aspects of settlement; the conceptualization of cultural landscape, and the taxonomy of cultural landscape from the perceptual theory.
Types of Cultural Heritage Landscapes
In 1992, the UNESCOs World Heritage Committee identified three types of cultural landscapes (or Cultural Heritage Landscapes). These types have been adopted by Abyaneh region of Culture among others. The types are outlined as follows:

1) Landscapes which are designed or intentionally created (e.g., parks, campuses, estates)
2) Landscapes which have evolved; also called vernacular landscapes, (can be either inorganic, or organically modified over time) “reflects the physical, biological, and cultural character of our everyday lives, [and] function plays a significant role” (Birnbaum, 1994, p. 2). Evolved landscapes have two subsets:
a) Relic – a landscape where the evolutionary process came to an end sometime in the past, or
b) Continuing – a landscape that retains an active social role in society, and in which the evolutionary process is till in progress. This landscape exhibits significant material evidence of its evolution.

Examples of relic-evolved landscapes could be any of the abandoned industrial compounds and ruins in our Region, or abandoned farms
Examples of continuing-evolved landscapes could be any of the Region’s historic cores, or any of the still operating heritage farmsteads – as found in Iran

Landscapes which are associative - this category includes places characterized by powerful religious, artistic, or cultural associations of natural evidence, rather than material cultural evidence, which may be insignificant or even absent. They may be “large or small, contiguous or non-contiguous areas and itineraries, routes or other linear landscapes – these may be physical entities or mental images embedded in a people’s spirituality, cultural tradition and practice. The attributes of an associative cultural landscape include the intangible, such as the acoustic, the kinetic and the olfactory, as well as the visual”

An example of associative landscapes might be found anywhere along the Grand River as it was an important transportation route of the First Nations People and the early settlers of our area.

Cultural aspects of settings
Environment-behavior studies elucidate the pattern, principles, role, and similarity amidst differences and difference amidst similarity. Cultural analysis could be done in two approaches. The inductive method attempts to relate human behavior with the environment while the deductive approach explains the needs of the cultural landscape in design which also plays an important role in the analysis and designing of the built environment. The process also helps explain the difference of environmental characteristics and difference of opinion such as comfort, environmental quality, environmental standard and how people respond to place, climate, use of material and technology. (Rapoport.1998)

The idea of cultural and scape
The cultural landscape is expressed by spatial order, temporal, meaning, communication, activity, interaction, territory, cue, transforming, and systematic control base on completely idealism concept practice. Cultural landscapes are combined between manifest and elements of nature that must be studied together, including considering settlement system, and the relations between location and housing (Rapoport.1992a,1996b). Moreover, geographer identified cultural landscape as the trace and evidence of the changing of land, topography and environment made by men from activities in their community lifestyle or ethnography that appear both in concrete and abstract characteristics.

The class if citation of cultural and scape
The UNESCO categorized cultural landscape into three types. First, the landscape is defined as what is intentionally designed and created by men such as garden, park, etc. Second, I and scape as
what has evolved as a result from changes in society, economy, administration, religion, and belief. And finally, it relates to what is involved in religion, art, and culture or natural elements. Cultural landscapes could be further categorized as historic sites, historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscape, and ethnographical landscapes. (Charles et al., 1992).

**Cultural Features and Other Methods of Protection**

There are several cultural features which may be found within a cultural heritage landscape. The Region of villages in a different climate and geography has recognized some of these features and has used different tools to protect them and apply significance. Other tools and features have not been utilized or recognized within the Region; view sheds, significant valley lands, historic trails, etc. Below is a short summary of features, and tools available to strengthen the cultural heritage landscape policy.

**Views sheds**

Abyaneh region defines a viewscape as a line-of-sight from a specific location for a landscape or a portion of it, and a viewshed as a sequence of views or panorama from a given vantage point.

A view of a certain cultural heritage landscape or feature may be of Regional significance. Protection of view sheds is one way a municipality can preserve the appreciation of a cultural heritage feature or landscape. Viewsheds can become effective tools through pie shaped areas demarcated on a map with height restrictions within the boundaries.

**Heritage Conservation Districts Making**

Abyaneh Heritage Act provides for the designation of heritage conservation districts (HCDs). HCDs, in a similar way to cultural heritage landscapes, protect buildings as well as the surrounding landscape and features in a contiguous fashion. The main difference is that HCDs are perhaps more restrictive than a cultural heritage landscape designation or listing. Following approval of a local designation by-law (and confirmation by the Ontario Municipal Board) any alterations, additions and demolition of property within a heritage conservation district requires a permit from the local municipality. The approval or denial of a permit will usually be determined in accordance with approved guidelines and the district plan.

It is recommended that no cultural landscapes be identified within HCDs as they already receive protection through this designation.

**Significant Valley lands**

Valleylands in Abyanesh region are extremely important to the cultural heritage of our people due to their function as early transportation corridors (by boat, or canoe), as sources of fresh water, and as places where industry and settlement formed. Most jurisdictions including the Region of that have policies in their official plans relating to the identification or defining of significant valleylands of the PPS indicates that development can occur only in significant valleylands if no negative impacts occur.

The development and site alteration may be permitted on lands adjacent to significant valleylands if it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or on the ecological functions for which the area is identified. What constitutes as a significant valleyland, or how to identify one was not outlined in the PPS and is up to individual municipalities to address.

**Human Heritage Routes**

Human heritage routes could include historic trails, historic waterways, historic highways, or scenic driving routes. HPAC has identified scenic drives in our Region, but this identification offers little protection.
**Case Study: Region of Abyaneh village**

Abyaneh is a beautiful historic village at the foot of Karkass Mountain 70 km to the southeast of Kashan and 40 km to Natanz. This is a village of living traditions, architectural styles (all in red clay), and probably the most interesting example of human adaptation to nature, wherein one can transcend boundaries of time and space and experience the ancient civilization and culture of Iran. The village is compact, with narrow and sloped lanes, and houses located on the slope as if placed on a stairway. Here, the roofs of some houses are used to serve as the courtyard for other houses higher up on the slope. The language spoken by the literate people of Abyaneh is Parthian Pahlavi. They are deeply committed to honoring their traditions. No matter how well-educated a person from Abyaneh might be, he or she puts on the traditional Abyaneh costume on coming back to the village from anywhere in Iran. (Pic 1)

![Map of Abyaneh village](image1)

There are a good number of old houses in Abyaneh, among them the homes of Gholam Nader Shah and Nayeb Hossein Kashi. In addition to the Zoroastrian fire temple (from the Sassanian period) in the village, there are three castles, a pilgrimage site, three mosques named Hajatgah, Porzaleh, and Jam’e, all worth a careful visit. Altogether there are eight mosques in the village. The Hajatgah mosque, built next to a rock, dates from the early Safavid period, according to an inscription on top of its door. Inside the mosque there is a beautiful nocturnal prayer hall with wooden capital pillars.
Porzaleh mosque, built during the Ilkhanid reign in the oldest part of the village, has a very vast nocturnal prayer hall. The ornamentation used here look very much like those of the tomb of Bayazid of Bastam, the great Persian mystic. The main cultural landscape contain architectural fabric of rural texture and regional ecosystems practically historical elements that exist in village. (Pic2)

Figure 2. Abyaneh village landscape and rural texture

There are several reasons for locating the village in this ecosystem. Most notably better use sunshine, protection against sudden floods and protect against undesirable winds are the most. But the most important factors in shaping the cultural landscape of the village are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Important factors in shaping the cultural landscape of Abyaneh village

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors influencing the formation of cultural landscape</th>
<th>The distinction of Abyaneh village</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Climate</td>
<td>Up to Village location in mountain area. Climate depends on geomorphic situation of region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Morphology</td>
<td>For climatic and safety reasons rural morphology of village is compacted and organically developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrounded Nature</td>
<td>Village gardens and agriculture lands make exactly the formation of buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Primary terracing creates up to rivers ways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Local safety is related by 3 factors: village locating quality, administrative meets and local people culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape system</td>
<td>Main people preference is according to environmental jobs like agriculture and livestock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Jobs</td>
<td>Agriculture and livestock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Customs</td>
<td>Due to primarily the most effective factor is culture that influences on rural building and texture architecture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings of the study
Physical characteristic and behaviors responding to physical functions

The research found that people’s way of life is attached to traditional practice and local culture in accordance with their ancestors’ believes. Some Traditional or religion believes cause to make buildings or some spaces in village that belong to people culture or costumes. Islamic believes also create mosques and any religious building in any civilization and Abyaneh village like others special architecture that present this idea. 

Despite of building Characteristics and pattern changes to accommodate Traditional lifestyle and some modern possibilities, some traditional building styles still existed without extensive modifications. Amidst the variety of architectural styles in the study area most buildings were made of wood and thatches, in accordance with the availability of traditional building materials, as verified by data from questionnaire survey and in depth interview. The traditional housing style was mostly one-story and some of theme has 2. (Pic 3)

![Figure3. Abyaneh village building characters](image)

The spatial plan of rural texture (Architecture and Rural Plan)

Location and context of the villageare linear form and along the river is derived from water sources. Gardens and cultivated lands are located in south of the river that using the ground slope, could easily benefit from surface waters. The village populationgrowthcaused to rural texture will be spread. The village is divided into three alleys. A yes-man district on the south side and Pol district on the north side of the village and Hardehdistrict is located on the eastern side.

Abyaneh located in a mountainous region and because of that special features architecture of the village is related to this climate. Village development on the slope of the mountain causing it to be protected from strong winds. This is to protect a building against lateral pressures and heat control and It is makingof stone or clay.

The village buildings generally have two to three stories. (Pic 4,5) And how the placement of the house on mountain slope leading up to the second floor to see the beautiful scenic valleys, In addition to sun exposure and air conditioning, ventilation and indoor air helps with being village in a good condition. Rural Texture of the village and its development subordinated from organic pattern and most of the alleys are narrow and buildings built as a vernacular architecture product, so buildings plan and rural spaces in the village was designed related to residence needs and most of spaces spread in spiral form into the village. (Pic 6)
Figure 4. Abyaneh vernacular architecture

Figure 5. Abyaneh ordinary building’s interior spaces
Dwellers' Perception and Response to changes

The dynamic of cultural landscape and physical settings is found to affect the perception and adaptation of the local lifestyle and housing in four different ways: preservation by leaving the ritual and ancestor ground untouched, limited and gradual adjustment, adaptation in material use yet retaining the functionality and housing structure, and finally a total modification. The current generation of people because of better life condition in the village want to live in it so some changes are acceptable and useful. The last category was the opinion expressed by the younger generation who are not settled within and working outside of the community. Perceptions of tended to differ among the dwellers according to their length of stay in the community. New comers tend to be more receptive to changes in the cultural landscape and some new trends in a village that belongs to the tourism industry like residential condition for visitors such as hotels, shops and emergency possibilities are touchable. (Pic 4)

CONCLUSION

There exists various „treatments options for cultural heritage are contained preservation generally involves the least change and is the most respectful of historic materials. It maintains the form and material of the existing landscape. Rehabilitation usually accommodates contemporary alterations and additions without altering significant historic features or materials, with successful projects involving minor to major change. Restoration or
reconstruction attempts to recapture the appearance of a property, or an individual feature at a particular point in time, as confirmed by detailed historical documentation. The latter two treatments most often require the greatest degree of intervention and thus, the highest level of documentation.

Urbanization had affected on the changes of dweller’s perception and environmental changes caused to deformation of rural sustainability and some cases caused to made devastation about cultural landscape and the loss of area identity. Besides, it obviously presented that cultural identity, such as beliefs, norms, functions, social beliefs, social structures, family structures of community that formed a cultural landscape as heritage in time were involved with cultural landscape indicators. Moreover, it also affected the response process both in the aspect of cultural landscape changes and physical landscape of settlement in the area. Hence, in order to manage or develop any area, it should consider the cultural landscape perception of dwellers and effects towards cultural landscape changes and physical landscape in that area.

REFERENCES


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