Public Space Production as a Part of Urban Riverfront Development Scheme: A Contemporary Approach for Turkey, Case of Amasya

Bige ŞİMŞEK İLHAN, Amasya University, Amasya, Turkey
Zeynep ÖZDEMİR, Istanbul Technical University, Istanbul, Turkey

1. Introduction

This paper focuses on “the sustainable riverfront (re)development” on the basis of the waterfront redevelopment/regeneration/revitalization phenomenon which emerged firstly the main industrial cities of Europe and North America and then became the global phenomenon all over the world, evolving in the fifty years up to now. The waterfront re-development can be defined as the transformation of urban lands, confronted decay and decline due to the retreat period of the industry from downtown waterfronts, in terms of economical, ecological, spatial, social, and cultural aspects with the aim of bringing new functions to derelict waterfront zones to be able to become a part of the city again. This phenomenon has led to “return to the water” movement, causing local authorities put their waterfronts on their agendas and reconsider their new roles. In the half century until today, with numerous projects realized all around the world, many coastal cities on various sizes (metropolitan, big, middle, small cities) which have a water body (ocean, sea, river, lake, bay, creek or canal) have radically developed visions, scenarios, strategies, policies, plans, projects to re-vitalize their disregarded waterfront zones not only “abandoned” by industrial uses but also remained “inactive” for so long and to (re)integrate the city and water, physically and socially. Thus, waterfront re-vitalization became a process in which various actors (central and local governments, politicians, public and private institutions, entrepreneurs/developers, professional chambers, related professions (planners, architects, engineers, restorators, designers, artists, ecologists, urban historians, urban geographers, urban sociologists et al.), academicians, various consultative committees (especially conservation and preservation ones), several relevant economic entities (such as urban tourism companies et al.), non-governmental organizations, community volunteers, citizens, media get involved in order to be in search of thinking and working with their “new waterfront” cooperatively.

This paper is based on the argument that each waterfront’s unique characteristics and values deriving from the “geography” and “culture” of the city to which it belongs should determine the (re)development strategy. However, in this half century experience, different cities of different countries from different continents all over the world have realized waterfront (re)development scenarios by becoming aware of, having knowledge of, being affected by, and learning from each other. This make the phenomenon get a global character and let us “common issues and concepts” be deduced for developing more successful and more sustainable waterfront re-vitalization organizations.

This paper is based on the argument that waterfront (re)development is a long-termed process which compose of interrelated phases that shapes “the final product”; that is, the new waterfront development; and the most critical issue of the final product is “the realization of public spaces along the shoreline” to ensure an interaction between the city and the water. The aim is to make the waterfront be “the focal point of daily life” again as it was in the past; that is, “lively waterfront zone” which had been common, public, and had included various activities. But this time, this interaction should be re-considered and re-constructed by the necessities of this era by regarding the current conditions which shape the public space production. Thus, this paper focuses on the most important component of a sustainable
waterfront (re)development: the provision of a social benefit via the production of successful public spaces along the waterfront and bears the argument that the produced public space system along the shoreline should create “a sense of local identity” which can be only achieved by revealing and referring the natural/ecological characteristics and cultural features composed of historical heritage, social background, past experiences of the waterfront and the collective memory in programming and designing phases.

In comparison with the developments and experiences all over the world, Turkey has been recently confronting with waterfront (re)development phenomenon. Thus, this gained “global experience” is an advantage for Turkey to be able to benefit from positive and negative consequences of them. In this context, within the scope of this paper, it is aimed to reveal the “main components” necessary to formulate a sustainable waterfront (re)development project in general; and then, to determine the “key concepts and issues” for programming and designing contemporary series of public places and events in order to draw a “conceptual framework” for the production of public spaces, which will be specialized for waterfront zones, in the context of sustainability concept.

Based on this conceptual framework, the riverfront development of Amasya, an old historical city of Turkey located on one corridor along the “Yeşilırmak Valley” through which the river called as “Yeşilırmak” runs is evaluated.

In this way, this paper, in general terms, displays the components needed for the organization of a sustainable waterfront (re)development scenario considering social benefit by means of presenting a “conceptual agenda” for Turkish cities, this provide a guiding source which will light the way for further schemes.

2. Sustainable Urban Waterfront Development: Key Concepts

Below, “main components” which make a waterfront (re)development project be sustainable are specified. These components, which are expressed below in the form of fundamental principles adjusted to riverfront (re)development within the scope of this paper, have been developed by integrating the qualitative data and findings obtained from relevant literature (Wrenn, 1983; Torre, 1989; Charlier, 1992; Knaap and Pinder, 1992; Breen and Rigby, 1994; Breen and Rigby, 1996; Fisher and et al., 2004; Jones, 2007) and “Urban Waterfront Manifesto” (1999) of “The Waterfront Center” (a non-profit educational organization formed in 1981 with the aim of helping the communities enhance their urban waterfront resources through a variety of educational and advisory services) (web 1) by using an “inductive reasoning”.

- to adapt derelict or inactive riverfront zones to the urban fabric and social life with regard to current conditions and needs of the era should be adopted as an “urban policy”
- to ensure a coherent (re)development scheme peculiar to the riverfront, preliminary action should be to produce conceptual (re)development alternatives by analysing economical, physical, social conditions of a riverfront zone, determining potentials and limits of the area
- to determine a (re)development concept in which possible interest groups who can get involved the project should be decided as a result of an examination on these alternatives mentioned above
- an urban riverfront (re)development strategy which involves targets to make the riverfront zone be vitalized in terms of economical, ecological, and social by regarding existing unique natural, historical and cultural values should be formulated
- a “master plan” which involve decisions to realise this strategy should be formed
- the improvement of the environmental conditions of damaged waterfront areas should precede from the economical and social (re)development of the riverfront zone
• water quality management and river flood control are prerequisites for riverfront (re)development. Thus, riverbed regulation and river basin reclamation should be the main issues of land use planning.
• natural reserves, historical texture and cultural values, which characterize the local identity of a waterfront zone should definitely be preserved in riverfront (re)development schemes, creating the new image of a riverfront based on revealing uniqueness of a waterfront zone which in the end will promote the spirit of place. This local identical character of the new riverfront attracts not only citizens but also tourists at the regional, national and international level, motivating local economy
• to ensure the public “accessibility” to the waterfront, “public space production” continuous along the rivershores should be focus of a (re)development scheme, making the social goals be primary; this should be guaranteed in master plan decisions
• to finance costly (re)development projects and accelerate the process public-private sector partnership should be provided, securing public investments and attracting private resources
• to re-establish an interactive relation between the water element and the city, water-based usages, activities, and facilities should be privileged in (re)development schemes
• to realize the strategies developed in accordance with visions and targets of (re)development policy, it should be formed “an organization”, which can ensure to conceptualize, implement, and monitor a riverfront (re)development project and it should be developed a riverfront (re)development project management unit, that is a development entity, to ensure the quality and sustainability of the project
• to develop a multifaceted riverfront (re)development project with the participation of different actors to the process, it should be provided an opportunity for an interdisciplinary work (including economists, engineers, geologists, city planners, architects, landscape architects, restorators, art historians, archaeologists, ecologists, environmental artists, urban geographers, urban sociologists, pedagogs and et al. ) to think on the waterfront and produce a satisfactory project in common, promoting a team consisting of specialists
• to get support from a clear majority of an urban society for the new river development scenarios, it should be provided opportunities for meetings and common studies between these profession disciplines and politicians, public authorities, entrepreneurs, developers, private organisations, community groups and citizens to consider the needs and demands of different interest groups, creating a social consensus by incorporating citizens who want to have a voice in waterfront (re)development by using citizen right into the process. Especially public participation (generally via non-governmental organizations) in the process is one of the key elements of sustainability of the project

3. Contemporary Public Space Production: A Conceptual Agenda for Waterfronts

Waterfront had been a special urban space on which the city-water interaction had traditionally been “spontaneous” at historical coastal cities. As for our age, this interaction is not spontaneous but “produced”, necessitating to be reconsidered and reinterpreted in such a way that respond to the current social needs, urban dynamics, and to the changing meanings of nature, social life, leisure, and recreation.
To re-establish this new relationship between the city and the water, the shoreline should be allocated to “the public use only”. This paper hypothesizes that to organise the “public open space system” with the purpose of integrating the water to the city and city life again, “how waterfront lot is addressed” should be defined through planning and designing principles
determined during the successive and interrelated phases the (re)development process, guaranteeing the public space production along the waterfront.

Programming and designing “the public space system” along waterfront which contribute to create a “new image and identity” should be based on the distinctive natural and cultural values derived from the “geography” and “culture” of a waterfront. Waterfront (re)developments disregarding locality which differentiate one waterfront from all others is expressed by Bruttomesso as de ja vu since it gets difficult for anybody to be able to perceive a location where he/she is in at that moment (Bruttomesso, 1993: 11).

Public space production which can reveal the “site-specific” originality by regarding the natural, ecological, historical, cultural characteristics and by creating a “perceptual, imaginative, mnemonic ambiance” created on the basis of these characteristics should make the waterfront be the main focal point of the city again. Below, “key concepts and issues” required for programming and designing contemporary series of public spaces and events along the strips of the waterfronts are specified. They are summarized from the conceptual agenda which involve the fundamental principles of the waterfront revitalization phenomenon developed in the PhD dissertation (Şimşek İlhan, 2012) of the author of this paper. This conceptual agenda has been formed with the reference of contemporary developments related to waterfront (re)development projects, urban design, the production of urban/public space; of the findings obtained from the case study analyses; of knowledge get from the global information flow by means of international network of non-profit oragizations (The Waterfront Center, Waterfront International Network, Project for Public Spaces et al.)

- to develop designs revealing “the local identity” of the waterfront, it should be made detailed analyses defining the unique natural and urban values and it should be prepared “urban design guidance” to develop a design language corresponding this local identity
- to use historical, cultural, industrial heritage by preserving them, it should be produced interrelated projects to re-evaluate registered buildings and structures by re-functionalizing with appropriate activity types as a tool for the cultural transfer
- to ensure the sustainability of a waterfront project, it should be balanced social and environmental benefits within the scope of public space planning and design. In this context, “the natural characteristics” of a waterfront zone should be determinative in design process; unique natural features of a waterfront should be incorporated to the programming of public spaces and events with the innovative design strategies and solutions of “an interdisciplinary design team”. Fragile natural habitats should be taken under preservation; wild flora and fauna of a river and riverfront area should be considered; and natural elements can be used by using methapors in design shemes to be able to make a reference to the nature of the area. In this way, not only the natural environment of a waterfront zone is able to reach an ecological balance again but also citizens and tourists are allowed for a relationship with nature to discover and experience its originality, “promoting the sense of an identity” of a waterfront area.
- to provide a maximum social benefit from a waterfront (re)development scheme, it should be dynamised “to access physically and socially” to the waterfront and along the waterfront at maximum level. To overcome this key issue, it should be reconsidered a transportation and circulation network being able to establish physical links between the city center and the waterfront, especially paying regard to a “pedestrian access”, and it should be provided a necessary infrastructure for an alternative modes of transportation.
- to ensure to make an inactive or passive waterfront be a main destination for citizens again, it should be organised “a continious dynamism along the waterfront” by means of creating an interrelated public spaces, open spaces and places, focal points, landmarks, a series of programs and activities both the water-based and the city-based through the shorelines by providing “new types of leisure time activities” in regard to the current recreational needs of a society
- to make a waterfront be an indispensable part of the urban life again, it should be let the shoreline be “accessible” by social groups and subgroups by means of a
“recreational programming” including activities and events which provide all kind of people with opportunities to experience being on a waterfront; that is, the waterfront should be not only physically but also “socially” accessible by responding to a social diversity. In this context, the “recreational programming” should involve activities diversifying passive open spaces to an extensive active usage with “a variety of events and facilities which can magnetize people of all ages, all income groups, all ethnicity for different motives at different times”; provide opportunity for usage at all hours of the day and night, at every day of all seasons

- to seek the opportunities which can make the water element be an essential part of the daily life with the aim of forming an interaction between the water and the city again, the essence of this recreational programming should be based on a creative and innovative thinking in which potentiality of the water element of a city is used; and should be a thematic in which water-based activities related to the transportation, entertainment, culture, education can be associated to the waterfront. In this way, it can be made possible the water element be function as an urban space.

- A design process should be based on giving references to the natural characteristics, historical background, and cultural values of both the water element and the waterfront zone. In this way, an atmospher having speciality of distinguishing characteristics of the waterfront zone can be created and; thus, the local waterfront identity can be established by revealing the uniqueness of the site, providing “a sense of place”.

Current literature (such as Francis, 1988; Carr et al., 1992; Craig-Smith, et al., 1995; Madden, 2001; Woolley, 2003; Carmona, 2003; Lang, 2005; Gehl, 2007; Jones, 2007; Carmona et al., 2008; Bertsch, 2008; Shaftoe, 2008 et al.) related on public space, urban design, landscape design, environmental design focuses on developing “planning and design criteria” for the creation of more successful open spaces for a society. Almost all are in substantial agreement on basic concepts by rephrasing and formulating them. Thus; on the basis of these references, “quality criteria for contemporary public space production” can be itemized, not including titles and subtitles, as indicated below.

- publicity
- accessibility to the waterfront
- continuity along the waterfront
- open space system consisting of interrelated parks, green spaces, recreational areas, activities
- legibility of the open space system of waterfront by means of clearliness and orderliness
- permeability of the open space system of waterfront
- functionality by means of variety of uses, activities, and facilities
- vitality
- authenticity
- attractability
- comprehensiveness
- satisfying (sense of belonging)
- enduring
- green and unpolluted
- comfortableness and security
- locality by means of identity and image
- sustainability
- environmental education
- exploration and experience
- safety and health
- quality of materials
- contribution to urban aesthetics by means of land art and public art
• contribution to local economy by means of making the city center a focal point
• community-led design process with community involvement
• monitoring, maintenance, and management for updating and upgrading

The “success criteria of a public space” is to provide the users with adoption and usage of there intensively. This situation is generally associated with “the sense of belonging to there”. Thus, especially since 1990s, professions interested in the organization of space (planners, architects, landscape architects, urban designers, environmental artists, land artists and so on) began to put on their agendas the concept of “place-making” which emerged with the intention of the determination of necessary conditions which make a produced public space turn into a public place. The place-making criteria have been developed to evaluate the success of the urban design projects. At the present time, it is inevitably accepted that the production of public space is a critical process which requires an interdisciplinary work which should let the community participate into the process to achieve the production of public spaces which will turn into public places adopted and used by community. The place, placelessness, place-making, place management are the concepts which emerged in relation to the identity of a space. If the identity which is attributed to a space can contribute to the creation of the sense of the place, this space will be designated as a place. Relph (1976), in his book “Place and Placelessness”, suggests that the identity of a space is determined by the activities realized with the participation of the users by the way of using and experiencing of the space produced by designers. Relph states that the thing which creates the identity is “persistent sameness and unity being in the collective memory of a society”, allowing that place to be differentiated from others (Relph, 1976: 45).

Based on the argument that the meaning and thus the identity of a place should be derived from the origin of the site, an identity of a public space began to be formed by defining systematically the identity indicators concerning to the space by referring to the origin and by to the collective memory of the site. Place is seen as the locus of collective memory and a site where the local identity is created through the construction of memories which be able to link people into the past. Thus, to make references to the natural, historical, cultural, mnemonic background of the site by using metaphors via design became the current common interest of professions in the production of public open spaces and places, creating the spirit of place (genius loci) and providing “a sense of place”.

Besides these, the studies carried out by PPS on public space production are considerable. PPS (The Project for Public Spaces) founded in 1975 is a nonprofit planning, design and educational organization dedicated to helping people create and sustain public spaces that build stronger communities (web 2). With their own words “Our pioneering placemaking approach helps citizens transform their public spaces into vital places that highlight local assets, spur rejuvenation and serve common needs.” Placemaking is “a people-centered approach” to the planning, design and management of public spaces. The approach is based on looking at, listening to, and asking questions of the people who live, work and play in a particular space, to discover needs and aspirations of them in order to create a common vision for that place to develop an implementation strategy; this immediately brings benefits for the people who use this public space (web 3). Since its foundation, PPS got become the premier center for best practices, information and resources on place-making by completing projects in more than 3000 communities in 43 countries and all 50 U.S. states. Evaluating numerous public spaces all around the world, PPS has determined “four key qualities” in common which successful places should have and has developed the “Place Diagram” (seen in Figure 1) as a tool for evaluating the degree of being place of any public space.

- Access and Linkages
- Comfort and Image
- Uses and Activities
- Sociability
4. Case of “Amasya”: The Historical City of Turkey Running Along a River Corridor

“Hardly any town in Anatolia is as great an inspiration for the painter than Amasya” Seton Lloyd (1997, 201).

Situated in the inner part of the Black Sea region of Turkey, Amasya is a traditional Anatolian town located on a land between the two hilly mountains namely “Harşena” and “Ferhat” fractured by a river called as the “Yeşilırmak River”. This riparian city developed on two sides of the “Yeşilırmak River” corridor is contained in a deep valley namely the “Yeşilırmak Valley” where these mountains stand as backdrops to the settlement. Amasya is a multi-layered historical Anatolian town settled since the end of the Palaeolithic Age, continuously inhabited by different civilizations of different eras chronologically Hellenistic Era, Pontus Kingdom Period, Roman Period, Byzantine Period, Principalities Period, Seljuk Period, Ottoman Period and Early Republican Period, remaining the historical structures, ruins and traces belonging to each era today (for example, the remains of Pontus castle walls from Hellenic and Roman period, rock-cut tombs from Pontus Kingdom Period, water tunnels and bridges from Roman Period, remarkable monuments from the period of Turkish principalities and mosques, tombs, “külliye”s from Seljukid and Ottoman periods, public buildings of Early Republican Period).

The shape of the city has been dictated by its special topography, allowing a linear growth. While the character of the city changes toward the east and west ends, the middle portion of the city center which is marked by two historical bridges maintains its strong references and sense of orientation. In this portion, the north bank is characterized with “Ottoman Style” traditional houses lined up along the riverfront facade, cantilevering from the ancient castle walls right at the edge of the river (Uraz and Balamir, 2006), giving a distinguishing feature to the city of Amasya. Between the river and the mountain, the north bank is composed of attached houses in parallel rows, called as “the inner city”, which has developed by securing itself under a sheltering rock namely the “Harşene Mountain” on which accommodates the rock-cut tombs of the Pontus Kings, giving an unique ambience to the city. Creating a dense urban fabric due to the limited land available, the wooden houses nestling together represent the individual’s mortality against the state and religion, as typical to Ottoman dwelling culture (Uraz and Balamir, 2006). Displaying a formal promenade of historic monuments, the south
bank holds more heterogeneous fabric marked with singular structures just as miniature tombs, medium-sized mosques and grand scale külliye (an Islamic-Ottoman social complex), namely the “Beyazıt Külliye” structures, preserving their object positions and strong boundaries (Uraz and BalamIR, 2006).
Unfortunately, due to the unplanned urbanization and the lack of vision of taking into consideration the unique characteristics of the city, not only the riparian features, natural characteristics and ecological structure of the urban environment but also the historical heritage, conventional housing settled on the riverfront which is unique to the city of Amasya, and traditional urban districts shaped by the Turkish-Islamic way of life of the Ottoman Period has partly been destroyed over time.

4.1 The Riverfront Promenade: A focal point of the daily life
The Yeşilırmak River’s running through the city by fracturing it leads to double-sided viewing between the northern and southern banks. The deep and narrow valley “Yesilırmak Valley” let the city be watched from the heights of it. Therefore, “watching the scenery from different points of view” is an integral part of daily experience of the city of Amasya. Each strip along the two banks of the river forms a scenic importance for the other, allowing people to have a closer contact with the past of the city of Amasya. Although still embracing the historic monuments, structures, buildings and traces, the dwellers and strollers of the south bank communicate with the past then the ones of the north bank having multi-layered historical heritage.
Approximately six meter s height stone floodwall constructed for river flood control along the northern and southern banks of the river Yeşilırmak, dates back to ancient times of the city, causing a direct contact of the people to the river be interrupted. Thus, in time, the water body has turned into be an object just for viewing, catching fish and a waterway running parallel along the riverfront walkway. Promenading, relaxing, recreating, meeting has became the main activities for the citizens of Amasya since the “Ziya Paşa Boulevard” the roadway which continues along the river pedestrianised in 1986 (Özdemir, 2013).
In 1999, a recreation project namely “The Waterfront Promenade” was prepared for the southern strip of the river “Yeşilırmak, situated between the two historical bridges at the city center, at two different levels of which one is under road elevation to let people get closer to the water. This project includes walkway, sitting benches, viewing balconies looking on the river, and an amphitheatre for activities and performances realized at special occassions, and official and religious holidays. Buildings and outdoor spaces of them are directly connected to the riverfront promenade constantly, providing settings for public life, and streets running perpendicular to the promenade open to the river visually by vistas, allowing pedestrians to access the promenade (Özdemir, 2013).
The waterfront promenade project realized in 1999 has not been updated in terms of its recreational programming up to the present. But nowadays an attempt for the re-development of the riverfront remains on the agenda of the Municipality of Amasya. it is planned to construct an inflatable rubber barrage in front of the place of disused “Court House” to keep the water at the same level to the “Istasyon Bridge” situated at the Station District. It is aimed that current flows will be kept under control to provide a still water for touristic boat tours on the Yeşilırmak River. Along a 150-meter-long part of the strips of the riverfront, it is planned to create observation terraces, excursion towers, resting areas, alleys and promenades, also planning to produce hydro-electric energy from the rubber barrage. The project approved by the “Council of Monuments” is planned to be completed within two years (web 4).

4.2 An evaluation on current usage of public open spaces along the riverfront of Amasya within the framework of the conceptual framework developed
By comparison with the “conceptual framework”, including key components of a sustainable scheme, presented in this paper, the visions, decisions, strategies, plans and projects by the local authority on the riverfront (re)development of Amasya;
• Does not develop an urban policy to address the issues of the city and the river as a whole with regard to current conditions and needs of the era and to ensure a coherent (re)development scheme peculiar to the riverfront, by analysing economical, physical, social conditions of a riverfront zone, resulting in a sustainable scheme
• does not display a holistic approach regarding the special topography, the natural reserves and ecological structure, historical heritage, cultural values, and most importantly the water body "Yeşilırmak River"
• does not ensure the interrelation of the successive phases of an ideal (re)development process, resulting in a final product of a sustainable public space production along the strips of the river
• does not ensure to conceptualize, implement, and monitor a riverfront (re)development project to realize the strategies developed in accordance with visions and targets of (re)development policy
• does not make an organization to coordinate various urban actors in order to think and work with their "new waterfront" cooperatively and to consider the needs and demands of possible interest groups who want to have a voice in waterfront (re)development; creating a social consensus
• does not provide public-private sector partnership securing public investments and attracting private resources to finance both the new riverfront development and the historic preservation costs

In conclusion, in terms of balancing the economical, environmental/ecological, and social benefits; it can be stated that the attempts of local authority and public institutions of the city of Amasya by means of producing projects for the (re)development of the riverfront zone in order to handle the basic issues related to the city and the river over time have failed to satisfy the sustainability. By comparison with the "conceptual framework", including “key concepts and issues” required for programming and designing contemporary series of public spaces and events along waterfront, specified in this paper, “the riverfront promenade project” of Amasya realized in 1999 and not updated until today;
• does not be based on detailed analyses defining the unique characteristics of the area, which will be projected, derived from the “geography” and “culture” of the riverfront zone, not resulting in the creation of “the local identity”
• does not prepared by regarding and by referring the natural characteristics, historical background, and cultural values to create perceptual, imaginative, mnemonic ambiance, not resulting in the revelation of the “site-specific” originality of the riverfront zone and development of local image and identity which can, in the end, cause the produced public spaces turn into public places thanks to the creation the spirit of place derived from the uniqueness of the riverfront
• does not ensure the ecological factors of the riverfront zone be determinative in design process by incorporating the unique natural characteristics of the riverfront to the programming of public space system with the innovative design strategies and solutions, not resulting in providing community with opportunities to explore and experience the natural milieu of the river, promoting the sense of place. In this context, the project fails to satisfy the the issues specified below;
  o to consider the coastal ecology by analyzing the ecosystem structure of a riverfront zone in detail
  o to give priority to the fragile environments which must be designated for land and water reclamation, rehabilitation, preservation in order to make both the riverfront zone and the river re-gain a balance again
  o to establish a buffer zone along the river
  o to enhance the quality of the water rehabilitating polluted land and water
  o to protect wild flora and fauna of a river and riverfront area and to designate wildlife protection areas along the river
to use endemic and native plants in public open space design
- to reveal the natural potentials of a riverfront by means of design in order to make a reference to the nature of the area, promoting the sense of place
- to represent the “nature” symbolically by using metaphors in parks and public spaces designed along the shoreline

- does not provide a “recreational program” by offering a variety of activities, events and facilities diversifying passive open spaces to an extensive active usage, which can magnetize all people for different motives at different times, at all hours of the day and night, at every day of all seasons, addressing the needs of the 21st century
- does not ensure the “water-related activities” related to the transportation, entertainment, culture, education to be an essential part of the daily urban life of the society, not resulting in the usage of the potentiality of the water, offering experiences which make possible an interaction between the city and the water again
- does not provide “a continuous dynamism along the waterfront” consisting of an interrelated public spaces, open spaces and places, focal points, landmarks, a series of programs and activities both the water-based and the city-based through the shorelines by providing new types of leisure time activities

Amasya, an Anatolian city maintaining its traditional culture, is a city which has been oriented to the river “Yeşilırmak”, this let the riverfront be continuously accessible physically and socially from the west end to the east end of the linearly developed city, providing an advantage to the citizens. But “the riverfront promenade project” fails to satisfy “the quality criteria for contemporary public space production”, which is itemized in the third part of this paper, making the produced spaces be turned into lively places which is adopted, used, and experienced by all segments of the society effectively. If these items are used as a check list for the “the riverfront promenade project” of Amasya, it may not to be put a check mark on most of the items.

Whereas, having natural, geographical, and cultural characteristics; coastal ecosystem; archaeological, historical, and touristic places; monumental structures and edifices of different civilizations of Amasya through the ages; vernacular architecture and urban fabric; and life style of traditional culture, the city of Amasya requires and deserves the meticulous attention to creative and innovative design strategies, schemes, solutions for riverfront (re)development, considering to intervene in precious urban setting having powerful characteristics. Within such a context, the strips of the riverfront at city center of Amasya should be approached by regarding such an amazing historical backdrop, ecological factors, socio-cultural values, and collective memory, which in the end will reinforce the urban identity by revealing “the spirit of place”.

5. In Lieu of Conclusion

“Waterfronts present unparalleled opportunities for interpretation and education of natural values, community history and culture… Preserving and interpreting the tangible aspects of the history of a place provides character and meaning to waterfront development” (The Waterfront Center).

This paper focuses on the production of public space along shorelines as a “key issue” of a sustainable riverfront (re)development. To be able to achieve sustainability, a (re)development scheme should ensure “three key issues” by balancing them: healthy environment, an effective social usage, and a vitalized local economy.

The paper hypothesizes that a sustainable waterfront (re)development is a long-termed process which compose of interrelated phases starting with a determination of a new vision for the waterfront and developing a strategy, decision-making, programming, planning, designing, projecting, implementing, and managing, that shapes the new waterfront development. The key point is “an organization” which be able to ensure the “involvement of various actors” at required phases to cooperate for taking part of the project. Thanks to just
kind of organization, it is possible to realize a sustainable project developed by basing upon multi-dimensional analyses (economic, social, spatial, ecological, historical, cultural, aesthetical and so on) of a waterfront zone carried out by different field of study, field of interest, thus, different logics, and in this way, capable of blending the demands of different sectors and current needs of a society. Such an organization can bring the waterfront in the “new image” by ensuring the production of a waterfront development project which can emphasise the distinguishing features of a given waterfront and define the most consistent, most coherent, most suitable, most reasonable arrangement of it, creating the “local identity”. With this "sense of identity", one can know where, which “geography” and “culture” he/she is in the world. In this context, the most critical issue of the final product should be the realization of public spaces along the shoreline to achieve the waterfront to be the focal point of daily life again by ensuring an interaction between the city and the water by means of adressing the current needs of the society in the 21st century. To do this, the issue of the creation of publicity and the production of as such public space system must be formulated during these successive phases of this process. The paper hypothesizes that a final product lies behind the process. Thus, This paper is based on the argument that the production of public space system continuously along the shoreline should be used as a tool for creating “local identity”; and this can be only achieved by revealing and referring the natural/ecological characteristics and cultural features composed of historical heritage, social background, past experiences of the waterfront and the collective memory in programming and designing phase of the riverfront zone. In this way, an atmospher having speciality of distinguishing characteristics of the waterfront zone can be created and; thus, the local waterfront identity can be established by revealing the uniqueness of the site, providing "a sense of place".

Based on analyzing the almost half century global experience on waterfront (re)development phenomenon, in this paper, it is aimed to draw “a framework” including main components which a sustainable scheme require and to provide “a conceptual agenda” including key concepts and issues which a successful public open space production, referring the place-making concept to reveal the spirit of place (genius loci), realized along waterfront requires. Within this framework, quality criteria for contemporary public space production is also formulated. Based on this conceptual agenda, the riverfront promenade project of Amasya was evaluated and tested to present to what extent it can ensure these global criteria. Thanks to the natural morphology of the city, the archaeological and historical structures appearing on it, and its traditional culture, the city of Amasya has a distinctive character. Thus, proposal of any planning and design scheme for the banks of the river needs to be made with an approach based on the sense of responsibility towards such an unique environment having historical and cultural heritage.

City authorities can realize unique waterfront (re)developments if they develop their own strategies in the context of their own geography and culture by basing on these “common issues” arising out of this global experience. In comparision to coastal cities of world, inspite of being surrounded on three sides by the sea, it is seen that Turkey, in general, has failed to develop a holistic approach regarding natural, historical, and socio-cultural aspects to their urban waterfront zones and establish a framework form “the integrated coastal zone management” referring to a comprehensive, a multi-dimensional management process which comprises all sectors related to coasts, and aims to generate a progress for all actions of the coasts by considering the sustainability concept. This situation in Turkey has come of the issues and problems derived from the authority disagreement and the disconnection between government departments at the legal, administrative, instituional, and organizational level.

Considering this fact, with this paper, it is aimed to display the key components needed for the organization of a sustainable waterfront (re)development scenario considering social benefit by means of presenting a “conceptual agenda” for Turkish cities, providing a guiding source which will light the way for further schemes.
References:

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