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Creating New Touristic Fashion Routes with Caravanserais on the Ancient Silk Road in Turkey

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ABSTRACT

In this study, caravanserais from Denizli to Dogubayazit which were taken to the tentative heritage list of UNESCO in 2000, will be extensively reviewed and recommendations will be made for the planning of touristic routes as the part of tourism development strategy in Central and Eastern Anatolia. The caravanserais were inherited by Anatolia Seljukis from Karakhanids and Ghaznavids and they offered comfort to travellers with the core structures of the society. Today, beside accommodation, event management or gastronomy activities, there will be alternative approaches for them to become the part of cultural tourism and touristic fashion roads. Nine of forty caravanserais on this route will be examined according to UNESCO list and rest of buildings will be eventually searched after this study and a reasonable planning. These caravanserais can be counted as follows: Akhan, Ertokus Han, Saadettin Han, Obruk Han, Agzikarahan, Sultan Han, Oresin Han, Mamahatun Caravenseria and Hacibekir Han (Unesco, 2000).

Keywords: Caravanserais; UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List; Touristic Fashion Routes

Introduction

Stone architecture of Caravanserais was Anatolian origin. They had different architecture styles according palaces where they were built either in the mountains or deserts. This approach based on organized and continuous state programme of Seljuk's. They offered shelters to caravans with comfort. They were called as Muyanl~k

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(Dormitory) which means "charity", "pious deed" and "kindness. In the 7. Century, they were called as Ribat which means Inns. They were mainly constructed between 12th and 13th centuries. Caravans could go 30 km for every 6 hours. Therefore, Caravanserais were built on every 30 km. Not only climatic conditions played important role but security played also major role for the construction of Caravanserais. Some of them had thick walls in order to prevent Mongolian attacks.

Research Methodology

Every caravanserai will be searched within the characteristics of city borders; structures and usage purposes will be identified according the architectural specialities of each region. NGO representatives, travel agencies, state decision makers and all related stakeholders are included in this process and the local situation is identified; on the other hand touristic fashion route will be recommended according the characteristics of region. Co-creation will be used as an effective tool to realise this attempt and future realisation of a possible project.

Research Aim

Caravanserais offered also some services such as baths, a masjid, a cistern or fountain, an infirmary, a cook shop, a place for the storage of provisions, and shops. Some handicraftsman and professions as wain man, blacksmith, money-changer, tailor, cobbler, physician and veterinary were also part of this structure. Beside these services, they became hotspots of exchange of knowledge between traders and locals transferring textile products such as silk and cotton items between countries. This enabled to increase the understanding the quality of different products and fashion of several countries and empowered cultural understanding between countries of ancient Silk Road. In this paper, a new approach will be defined for creating new touristic tours between caravanserais with the potential link between fashion, heritage and tourism. Anatolia is still one of the strongest textile exporter regions of the world. There are historical evidences which still show relationship between craftsmanship and trade of different textile production sites in different regions of Turkey (Akrofili, 2018). Different colouring techniques, quality wool and cotton products gave a name to this geography as a textile centre of the world. In order to regain the old textile and fashion reputation of this region, there is a need to approach fashion with old and historical patterns. There are several attempts to introduce new fashion styles with old patterns at different fashion stages (Malatya, 2017). Every Caravanserai can be stage for local craftsmanship and fashion of different regions.

State of Art

There has been restoration process with some old constructions. State has a special model in order to keep these old buildings intact. This concept can be called as PPP (Public-Private Partnership) and it is explained as 'Restore it, use it and delegate it to state for 49 years'. These tangible cultural values were transferred to private entrepreneurships where the state has no economic power to renovate them. Private

sector takes the responsibility of renovation at first, than they manage them and at the end of 49 years they completely withdraw themselves from the building. Since 2003, there are 27 han, 20 hammam, 4 madrasah, 4 caravanserai which were renovated. Ministry of Culture and Tourism changed this law in 2012 and reduced management term from 49 years to 30 years. If there is no direct investment, than it would be 20 years. Old agreements before this law alteration have their validity (Hazine, 2012).



H6 haritası bugüne dek saptanabilen Selçuklu kervansaraylarını, kervan yollarını göstermektedir. Map H6 shows the Seljuk caravanserais and caravan roads that are known to us today.

Figure 1: Caravanserais and caravan routes in Turkey

Source: <http://www.nigdekulturturizm.gov.tr/TR,74349/hanlar-bedestenler-ve-kervansaraylar.html>

Akhan (Denizli)

It was originally built in Denizli and was found at the western region of Seljuks. Its restoration was realised in 2008. It has restaurant, hotel, garden, coffee corner and it is place for many events and wedding organizations. It is one of the best examples of caravanserais in Anatolia. It bases on 1100 m² and with its square courtyard which has extraordinary carvings. It has deer, sphinxes, birds, eagle, lion, dragon which are the representative figures of Seljuks and old Anatolian civilizations (Kültür Portalı, 2017). Denizli is seen as textile capital of Turkey. Tourism, fashion, culture and textile can be combined in the future without neglecting each other.



Figure 2: Akhan Caravanserai after restoration

Source: https://www.tripadvisor.com.tr/ShowUserReviews-g297991-d8703360-r368890410-Akhan_Kervansaray-Denizli.html

Ertokuş Han (Isparta)

It is on the old trade route between Afyon and Antalya close Egirdir Lake. It was built by Mübarizeddin Ertokus who was the statesman in 1233 and he was the most trusted emir of Sultan Alaeddin Keykubad I. It has intact building structure and attractive inscriptions. Its renovation started in 2007. Here it is possible to see wrong management techniques. There are plastic tables and satellite in the surrounding of the building. Wrong lightening diminishes the attractiveness of this valuable building. It is also certain that restoration was made without much care. On the other hand, management of caravanserai cannot be easily found. Visitors must get in touch with the management before they want to visit here. They open the place without certain opening times (Turkishhan, 2017).

It is clear that there was goodwill for restoration for this building. Purpose of construction and end usage do not overlap. This can be changed with the help new approach for cultural route as it can be seen as the part of route system. Because it is not easy to attract visitors to this site therefore, local textile craftsmanship and Isparta Applied Science University, Gönen Vocational School Fashion Design Programme cooperation can easily open new future for this caravanserai with graduation results or special event exhibitions of new fashion designs (Gönen, 2018). This can be integrated with fashion tours with the background of Lake Egirdir.



Figure 3: Ertokuş Caravanseraı

Source: <https://www.kulturportali.gov.tr/turkiye/isparta/gezilecekyer/gelendost-ertokus-kervansarayi-kudret-han>

Saadettin (Zazadin) Han (Konya)

It is on the Aksaray-Konya main road. It was built by the vizier and architect Saadettin Köpek between 1236 and 1237. It was started under the last rule year of Alaeddin Keykubad and was finished during the Gıyaseddin Keyhüsrev's first ruling year. It has the one the best stylish structure in Anatolia. Restoration project was started in 2007 and finished in 2008. Restoration was made without scientific approaches even if

considerable financial spending was there. Some original pieces were removed and replaced by new stones. Noisy events and ceremonies are organized. It is now still under renovation and closed for visits (Turkishhan, 2014).



Figure 4: Zazadin Caravanserai

Source: <https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/289497082274821393/>

Obruk Han (Konya)

The Obruk Han is found within the borders of Konya which is located 4 km away from the main road between Konya and Aksaray. It is very close to a sinkhole (Obruk) with 300 meter width and 150 meter deep and filled with water. It offers extraordinary view to visitors of han.

The date of construction is not known. It was dated back to 13th century. There are evidences that it was mentioned at the times of second Mongol invasions.

Restoration was started in 2007. There was misleading information about construction company's experience about restoration. The agreement between Ministry of Tourism and the company was cancelled after 40 % completion of restoration; a new company was assigned for restoration work but it was not finished (Emlak Kulisi, 2017).

There is still problem of non-scientific restoration and most of valuable artefacts were lost. Especially, visitors from Antalya on the way to Cappadocia visit this historical building and can have rest between two important destinations. During these visits, foreign visitors can have the image of Turkish fashion which can be displayed on different stages after the completion of restauration. Konya is still the centre of spirituality which comes from Mevlana times and his legacy with his enormous philosophy has influence on international mode designers such as Jean Paul Gaultier as well. From perspective of fashion tourism, this place offers incredible co-creation place between NGOs, municipalities, academicians and tourism managers.



Figure 5: Obruk Caravanserai waits for restoration

Source: <http://wikimapia.org/11794513/Obruk-han-Caravanserai#/photo/1397962>



Figure 6: Kızören Sinkholes

Source: <https://tarihtenfotograflar.blogspot.com/2012/08/obruk-han-konya.html>

Ağzıkarahan (Aksaray)

It is on the main road between Aksaray and Nevşehir. It was originally built 1231. During the history, people were called as 'Ağzıkara: Blackmouth' who were copying the books. As they made some failures, they tried to make corrections with their hands in black colour. As a result, their mouths were in black colour. It is first version about the name of the village and caravanserai which derives from the native people of this region. The second version about the name of the caravanserai is totally different. 'Ağız' in Turkish means door and the entrance of han could not get enough sun light. This makes the entrance dark which means 'Ağzıkara: Door is dark' (Ağzıkarahan, 2017).

Beside this, insurance was made for business people for the first time in the history. They stayed here for 3 three days free of charge. They could pray or learn courses according their wishes. It is now closed for restoration but it will be used as traditional shopping centre. Once restoration is finished, local people can sell their local products

such as candy, dried fruits, coffee and soup with the cooperation of restauration company for the potential visitors (Anitsal, 2017). According to historical evidences, this caravanserai was accepted as the first shopping mall of the history. Now, it is time to make proposal for fashion tourism with different boutiques as well.



Figure 7: Ağzıkarahan Caravaserai

Source: <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/453878468674391462>

Sultan han (Aksaray)

It was built in 1228 under the rule of Alaeddin Keykubad I and it is found on the main road between Kayseri and Sivas. This han has an impressive decoration among other caravanserais. Arches of mosque have dragon heads. Dragon has the meaning of wealth and it is mentioned in textbooks of these centuries (Kayseri Valiliği, 2017).

It was renovated three times. The latest one was in 2009. As a cultural centre, it is the best example of usage among other caravanserais while others are used as restaurants or places for different events. Same with other hans, there are some problems with renovation. For example, electric circuit gave a real problem to the decoration of the han (Hurriyet, 2017).

It has winter and summer residence with 4800 m² which makes it largest example in Anatolia. It was used also against attacks of Mongols as garrison with its great walls. It is now managed by the local municipality (Turkishhan, 2015).



Figure 8: Sultan Han

Source: <https://www.dunyabulteni.net/dunyanin-bir-ucu/aksarayin-sultan-hani-h233226.html>

Öresin Han (Aksaray)

This caravanserai was built in 1188 under rule of Sultan Kılıcarşlan II and it is on the road between Aksaray and Nevşehir. It was in the middle of two caravan roads and used by Romans, Byzantines and Seljuks.

In 2010, the restoration was finished. It is not in good shape from the perspective of renovation. Since then, it has been used as restaurant and gift shop. Groups from Cappadocia visit here frequently (Turkishhan, 2016). It is an ideal place for fashion shows and gives large area to share fashion styles of local craftsmanship. Nigde University Bor Vocational School Design and Tourism and Hotel departments can easily create new opportunities for fashion tourism in the future.



Figure 9: Öresin Caravanserai

Source: http://www.mustafacambaz.com/details.php?image_id=29436

Mamahatun (Erzincan)

Mamahatun was built in 1288. It has impressive stone work. It had many restorations. Milk, egg, boiled grape juice (molasses) was mixed and used in the mortar of building during the construction. It is now not use for any purposes. This has especially negative impact on the region which needs both social and economic development (Erzincan Yasam, 2017).



Figure 10: Mamahatun Caravanserai and Tomb

Source: <http://www.erzincanyasam.com/mama-hatun-turbesi/>

Hacibekir Han (Erzurum)

This han was dated back to 13th century. It was not renovated. It is found relatively in a bad form with lack of information. There is a need to renovate this building. This will give new perspective for the local people increasing their awareness for their heritage.

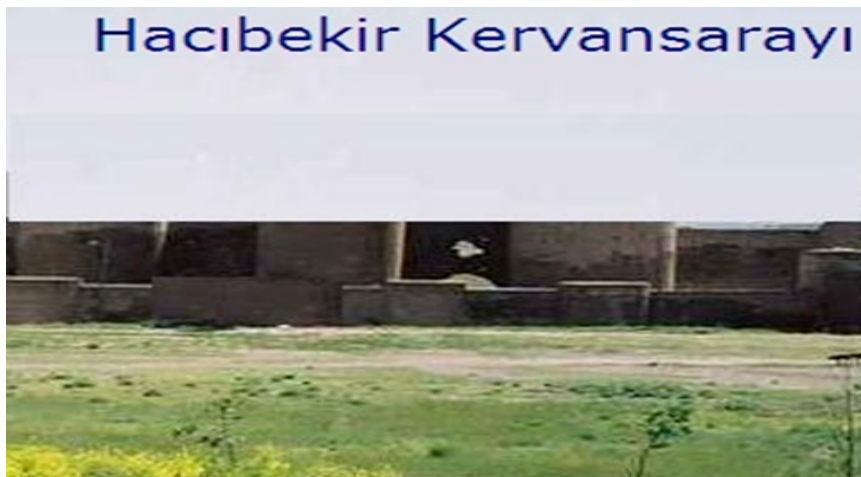


Figure 10: Hacibekir Caravanserai

Source: <http://puskulcu.blogspot.com/2009/03/haci-bekir-kervansarayi-askale.html>

Major Results

The caravanserai culture met the important needs of mankind in the history of Anatolia and it includes concrete proposals for the management of today's trade and religious routes. Critically, there will be an attempt to understand relationship between this long standing historical culture and the term of sustainability. Caravanserais as cultural heritages can be opened for touristic purposes with sustainability methods; used and preserved by co-creation techniques. Cultural and fashion interested tourists will be more attracted to those destinations and they will have more sensible approaches on those newly developed sensitive areas. Lately, results of this study will be used for creating a project in order to have financial support for the future needs. There are some recommendations for the future work:

Fashion, heritage and tourism must be underlined and caravanserais can be used for the purpose of fashion tourism.

Meaning of restoration and service loose its real meaning. Renovation must be made according to scientific criteria (Stones are not-original).

Caravanserais are income generating sources for companies but not for local people. This has to be changed for the sake of local people. Local people must involve economical processes in and around caravanserais with the help of local handcraftsmanship.

Cultural centres are neglected. More attention has to be given for cultural activities instead of pure economic purposes.

Common decisions are difficult to make because of agreement type between state and private ownership for 49 years. Common decisions must be made with different shareholders at equal level.

Tour programmes between caravanserais have to be organized. Every location has to propose its own speciality in order to have variety of activities. Especially low rated locations must get more interest from the state authority in terms of socio-economic aspects.

Each location shall have its own marketing strategy related with other locations. Harmoniously, every location makes its own promotion, pushes its cultural value above and deserves to be the part of UNESCO Cultural Heritage List.

More cooperation must be created between stakeholders from Europe and Turkey in order to have exchange of best case examples.

Implications

Central and Eastern Anatolian regions had interaction of different cultures with the help of trade routes. Interaction between trade and religious movements in the Anatolian history created good examples and basement for today's tourism and religious practices. Today, it is mostly expected that foreign visitors of this new technologically developed routes will create strong synergy with the local inhabitants. Therefore, it is important to keep alive the understanding between different beliefs with the help of tourism.

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