

No Times But Principles, A Case Study From PrieneAnatolia

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ABSTRACT

To emphasise the reusing of the local identities and cultural effects on contemporary designs, this paper is believed to have an important role for architects and for further designs. In this paper design theories in 1000's BC from Priene is held. The theories in urban and architectural design took place. From the intersection point of Ancient Greek and Western Anatolia, a city named "Priene" is chosen as a point of view because of its special location on the Aegean Sea Coasts; Asia Minor and its design principles on urban and housing scale which were used during 1000's and are still common. Also, in this paper, an analysis is done on urban and housing scale. The analysis has two main parts. In the first part, the important buildings in Priene and their settlement decisions take part. And in the second part, the houses of Priene are explained. The general outputs of the study can be put under two titles: urbanism and architecture. In terms of urbanism, those features of a city image reflecting onto today's world have been examined and the city of Priene has been analysed in the content of Lynch's elements ensuring formation of a city image. In terms of architecture, results obtained have been separately examined in the content of today's architecture as public buildings reflecting unique characteristics of Hellenistic architecture and as settlements. In short, the result that it is wished to reach in terms of city scale of the city of Priene in this study is the expression of the essence of the historical heritage using a modern language to ensure historical continuity.

1 INTRODUCTION

In view of the increase of the reactions with regard to the monotony, commonness and meaningless of modern architecture since 1960s, trend of the revival of the past in architectural environment, namely post-modernism, has occurred. With this revival, "culture" and "history" were attached importance and historical forms and new designs were begun to be used, (Cordan 1995).

On the other hand, tendencies of contemporary design such as getting references from history, putting forward the regional identities and cultural differences brought the idea like preservation and conservation of historic heritage and continuity of the past. But continuity does not mean only the preservation of everything in the past. Our responsibility today as designers, is to keep the previous values in mind while designing new built environments, not to keep them as monuments. While building for today and future, one must remember the past and interpret the former experiences for contemporary designs.

In this content, it is considered that the ancient Priene has enough qualities in terms of urban and architectural design principles which can be utilised for contemporary architecture. Therefore, the ancient settlement of Priene is analysed from urban and architectural point of view and the essence of the historic heritage is derived as conclusions for contemporary designs.

2 PRIENE IN HISTORY

Priene is in Ionia which has "the most beautiful sky on the earth" according the Heredot, (Akçit 1982). Priene, now located at 20 km south-west of Söke's (an Anatolian settlement) Güllübağçe village, was first established as a seaport among other 12 Ion cities near Maiandros (Menderes) River in 1000's BC by immigrants who spoke the Ion accent of Roman language, (Ana Britannica 1990). For many tourists, it is the most attractive of ancient settlements on the western Anatolian coast, (Bean 1992).

The first city that was built in 1000 BC was probably located on a peninsula. The city which was not suitable for settlement after floods from the river was then rebuilt on the hillside of Samsun Mountain (Mykale) at Naulokhos which used to be Priene's harbour, taking Athens as a model, with the support and help of Athens in 350s BC, (Ana Britannica 1990). The city which was

invaded by Lydians in the 7th and 6th centuries BC, was governed by first the Kyros and the Persian Empires in the middle of the 6th century BC. The city was moved to its present location after alluvions filled and carried the coastline of the city to the west. The city was under the rule of Alexander the Great in 334 BC and then was taken over by Pergamon Kingdom. The city was ruled by the Roman after the death of Pergamon King Attalos the third. During the Roman dominance, however, the city became more and more passive because alluvions from the river Maiandros (Menderes) continued to fill the gulf, becoming completely deserted in 12th century BC despite the fact that it was an important centre of bishopric, (Akurgal 1993).

3 PRIENE AS A CITY

Priene, located on the south hillside, was surrounded by beautiful but untidy and strong city walls immediately after it was rebuilt (Figure 1). On the 2.5 km long wall there are three portals on the eastern, north-eastern and western parts, (Akurgal 1993).

The main entrance of the city, is the north eastern archway which is reached by a stony ramp and on the north of this portal there are three cisterns which used to provide the water supply of the city. Water, taken from these cisterns was then distributed to all of the city by means of clay pipes and at several places in the city there were fountains, (Akurgal 1993).



Figure 1: **The Model of Ancient Priene**

The Acropolis was located at the top of the hill up north, (Bean 1992). However it had lost its religious importance at those centuries; religious places were distributed to the city as their availability and architectural function required.

Although it doesn't have much political importance, Priene carries a significance as the most typical example of ancient city planning that has survived until today, (Ana Britannica 1990). Priene has been planned according to the Hippiodamos system of the 4th century BC, (Mansel 1988), and is the best example of Hippiodamos city planning style on all grounds, (Figure 2).

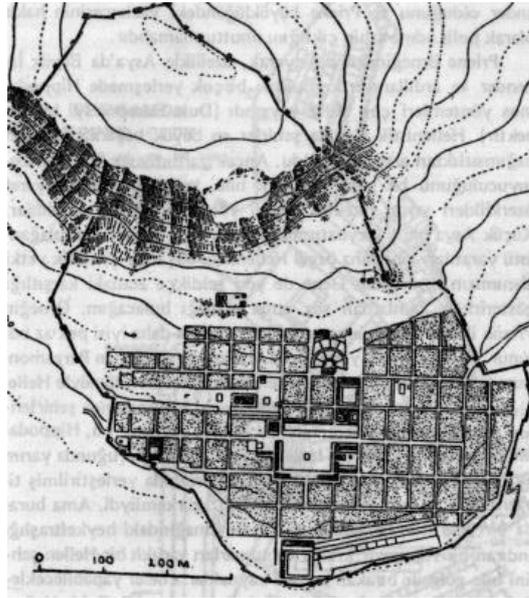


Figure 2: **The Settlement of Ancient Priene**(Wyhcherley 1986).

It's mostly a Hellenistic city which includes all the qualities that make up a "polis" and puts these together with a remarkable order and around a Hippodamos plan, (Wyhcherley 1986). The founder of the Hippodamos plan of the 5th century BC is Hippodamos from Miletos according to ancient resources. The plan characterises with streets lying parallel to each other and cutting each other with square angles and forming square and rectangular insulas in the middle, (Usman 1958). The insulas formed between streets in Priene city, which is an application of the Hippodamos plan to a hillside, is 160x120 feet.

Insulas formed by houses in Priene city planning are 47,20x20,40 cm. Religious and official consist of one, two or three blocks, (Akurgal 1993). With this planning approach, a completely rectangular plan was applied to blocks of houses, public places and buildings, and rarely nonrectangular plan was permitted to build. A suitable central area tangent to the most important main streets in the east-west direction was kept for the "Agora", some temples and public buildings were placed in specific places. The beautiful temple dedicated to Athena was placed on the terrace at the north-western Agora with a situation dominating everything; a balance was created between the Theatre at the top of the settlement, the Gymnasium and the related Stadion.

In Priene, with of 4000 people, secondary streets which have straits are usually 3,50m, main streets are 4,44m and the main street before the Sacred Stoa is 7,36m wide, (Bean 1992). Most important streets in Priene are "Theatre Street", "Athena Street", "West Street" and "Spring Street". These streets were named according to the important buildings located on them, (Akpit 1982).

4 THE IMPORTANT BUILDINGS IN PRIENE

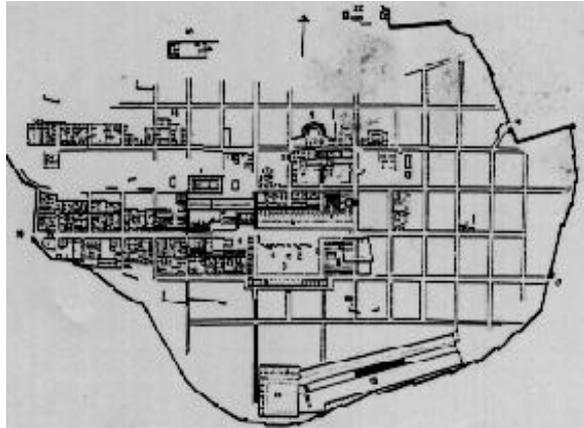


Figure 3: **The City Plan of Priene** (Akurgal 1993).

1)The Temple of Athena 2)The South Stoa of The Temple of Athena 3)Agora 4)The Sacred Stoa 5)Market Place 6)The Temenos of Zeus 7)Bouleuterion 8)Prytaneion 9)Theatre 10)The Temenos of Demeter 11)The Church of The Archbishop 12)Lower Gymnasium 13)The Temenos of Egypt Gods 14)Upper Gymnasium 15)Stadion 16)North-east Entrance 17)East Entrance 18)The Great House 19)West Entrance 20)The Temenos of Kybele 21)The House of Alexander the Great 22)Cisterns

4.1 The Temple of Athena

The Temple of Athena, which is located between Theatre Street and Athena Street on the south, is the oldest building of the city, (Figure 3: number 1), (Ana Britannica 1990). Athena Temple, also the main temple of the city, is the most precious building at the highest point of Priene city, (Akurgal 1993). The Temple of Athena in Priene, was built by Pytheos, the architect of the Mausoleion in Bodrum, which is one of the "seven wonders of the world". Pytheos has given a classical example of Ion architecture with this building and has written a book on his own architecture method as we learn from Vitruvius, (Akurgal 1993). The Temple, situated in the east-west direction, is a 6x11 colonnaded peripteros in the Ion order. The eastern half of the temple whose construction began in the middle 4th century BC completed by Alexander the Great and its epitaph has the sentence "King Alexander presented this temple to Athena Polias" written on it, (Akpit 1982).

4.2 Agora and The Sacred Stoa

The centre of the city is the Agora which was built in the 3rd century BC and almost occupies an area of two blocks (75,63x35,40m), (Figure 3: number 3). Three sides of the Agora are surrounded by stoas in the Doric order. These stoas closely related to each other have various purposes. Most are shops, some are offices and some are sacred places. The Agora of Priene, like all agoras in Hellen cities, is an open area where public gatherings, festivals and trade activities are take place. Thus, the agora meets two main functions; one being political and the other being trade, (Bean 1992). In the second brilliant period of Priene, that is the second half of the 2nd century BC, the agora was surrounded by very large buildings. The most important of these is the Sacred Stoa built by Cappadocian King Ariarathes, (Figure 3: number 4).

There were writings giving important information about Priene city and its life style on the side walls of Sacred Stoa. In addition, this stoa included sacred areas, public archives and offices, Bouleuterion and Prytaneion were entered through this stoa, (Bean 1992).

4.3 Bouleuterion and Prytaneion (Council-House)

The Bouleuterion which occupies all of one block (insula) together with the Prytaneion next to it, is the best preserved building of Priene with the Theatre, (Akurgal 1993). In this building, built in

the 150s BC, decisions about the governing of the city were taken. The Prytaneion was the place where the "Boule" consisting of ministers performed their daily jobs, (Akurgal 1993). The Prytaneion was also the building which represented the government, that is, the City Hall, (Figure 3: number 7,8).

4.4 The Temenos of Zeus

This section, located next to the eastern Stoa of the Agora, was changed in the 3rd century BC opening place for chief God Zeus and a Temple was built and named after him, (Akbit 1982). This temple is a prostylos in the Ionic order. The wideness of the statue stand at cella implies that two gods supposedly Zeus and Hera were worshipped here, (Figure 3: number 6).

4.5 The Temenos of Egypt Gods

It is situated in the south of Theatre Street at the east of the city, (Ana Britannica 1990). It consists of an atrium surrounded by walls and an altar in the middle of the atrium. It was meant for Egyptian Gods Isis, Arabis and Serapis, (Figure 3: number 13), (Akbit 1982).

4.6 The Temenos of Demeter

At the north west of the Theatre, at the skirts of rocks, forming the Acropol, stands the Temple of Demeter-Kore which immediately rising, is the oldest temples of the city, (Ana Britannica 1990). The temenos which has a portal on the earth, is consisted of the front hall, sacred area and altars, (Figure 3: number 10).

4.7 The Temenos of Kybele

The Temenos of Kybele, consists of an atrium with five corners which is untidy like the city walls on the south and on the western end of the main street between the Agora and Sacred Stoa, (Figure 3: number 20), (Akurgal 1993).

4.8. Theatre

The Theatre, located in the north-east of the city is one of the most important buildings of the Hellenistic period of Priene, as well as the ancient period, (Figure 3: number 9). Despite the changes it has gone through during the Roman occupation, it has preserved its Hellenistic character. As well as being a place where various cultural events are carried out, the Theatre also serves as a gathering place for the public council (eclesion). The Theatre of Priene, consists of mainly three sections; spectators seats (theatron), orchestra and the scene.

The theatron is horse-shoe shaped, as in the Classical and Hellenistic periods and spectator seats are 50 rows holding 5000 people, (Akurgal 1993).

4.9 Gymnasiums

Priene has two gymnasiums; one in the north of Bouleuterion, and the other in the south of the city. The Upper-Gymnasium which has been changed largely, consisted of rooms lined up around a peristyle atrium during the Hellenistic period, (Figure 3: number 14). First built in the 4th century BC, the Upper-Gymnasium is Priene's oldest school and physical exercise centre, (Akurgal 1993). This school was meant for epheps and children (paias). Lower-Gymnasium, dated 2nd century BC, is in a way a gymnastic school which trained the youth physically and mentally, (Figure 3: number 12). The atrium in the peristyle Lower-Gymnasium was used as a training ground and main rooms with the front-entranced meeting room supported by two columns are gathered in the north side, (Wyhcherley 1986). On the West, on the south of the entrance, there are well-preserved Greek style bathrooms and half human-height stone sinks into which water flew out of lion head shaped gargoyles (water spouts). This school with the Stadion was meant for the youth, (Akurgal 1993).

4.10 Stadion

The Stadion which is next to the east end of the Gymnasium, lays through the southern rampart of the city, (Figure 3: number 15), (Ana Britannica 1990). Because of the landscape, it has spectator seats only on one side. For the same reason, the typical rolling of the two short ends we can observe in stadions, cannot be seen here. Above the spectator seats there is a 6m. wide excursion place which is as long as the stadium (190m), and next to it there is a stoa of the same length, (Akurgal 1993).

5 THE HOUSES IN PRIENE

Priene as a Hellenistic city, carries Hellenistic period characteristic in regards to both city planning and house settlements. Houses have the secondary importance in the Hellenistic city planning. The agora, sacred places, theatre and the gymnasiums occupied the space where traditional sacredness or suitability were determined, and the remaining space was filled with houses, (Wyhcherley 1986). As it was said before, main streets lay in the east-west direction and these streets were connected to each other by streets in the north-south direction. Streets cut each other with square angles. As Priene is located on sloping ground, streets in north-south direction often had stairs.

In this content, the Hippodamos method meant not creating new areas for the design of house blocks but restoring old ones. In old cities, the unsteadiness of streets, the density combined with the unsteadiness, the simplicity of the design of the exteriors and the lack of designed structural elements in house blocks, created an effect of chaos about city planning. On the contrary, in cities designed according to the Hippodamos style, plan of houses were simple and clear. Houses located in the rectangular blocks, often though not always, were divided into many rectangles of the equal size. However, in Priene, an example of having the characteristics of Hippodamos plan, the division of blocks is quite various. In streets, even where blocks are carefully designed, in the borders shaped by local style, the houses have originality and various differences in their interior plan details. Number of houses per blocks, the arrangement of these houses in the blocks and the size as well as proportions of these blocks changed from region to region, (Wyhcherley 1986). The blocks in Priene, as mentioned before, were 47.20 x 35.40m. This proportion which is nearly 3/4, made up "insulas" with the Roman expression; and 4 houses were put into each insulas. Sometimes a big house could cover all of the block, and this could be transformed into two detached houses or to a single house. There were no fixed rules about locating the houses.

The Megaron plan style, after a long unsteady existence, in the architecture of Helen houses, it has re-emerged strongly and has been repeated in Priene. Thus, houses carrying the architecture of Greek influences, reflect a style commonly seen in the Mediterranean surroundings, (Bean 1995). Best preserved houses of the city are located in the north and south of the West Street, (Figure 4) and on the north of Theatre Street, (Figure 5). Interior spaces which are kept away from strangers' eyes with high walls separating them from the street, display a plan schema with no relation to the street. Entrances are opened to secondary streets as much as possible and most important parts of houses, meeting and guest halls, are directed to the south to receive sun and light, (Usman 1958).

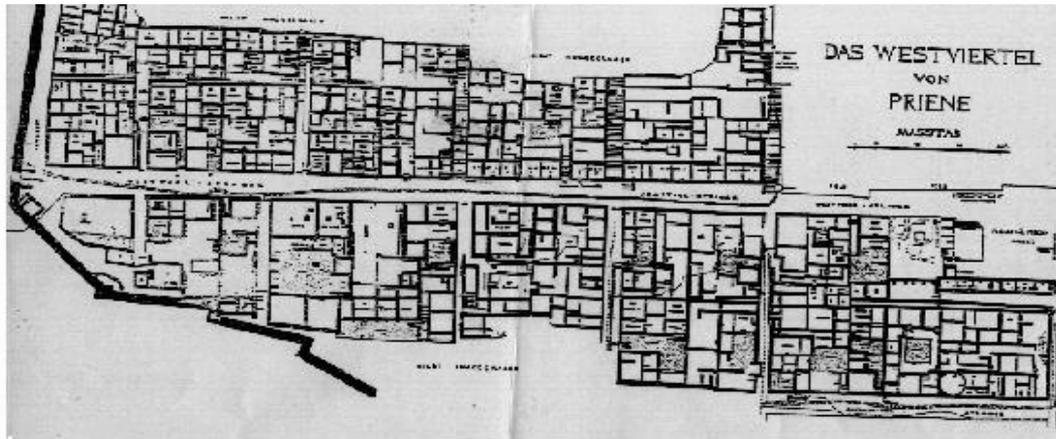


Figure 4: **The Houses of Priene on West Street** (Usman 1958).

On the monotonous elevation which gives no information about the inside is either no openings or very high on the second floor altitude. In the rooms which do not open to the atrium, windows which are much above eye level, have no glass and are covered with tablet shaped shutters with arch shaped holes on them. Besides air and light is received by means of doors opening to the atrium. Doors of Priene houses generally have single latches, monumental ones have double latches. The latches of doors have been made of panels nailed side by side and were placed in the rooms in a way that they do not occupy much space.

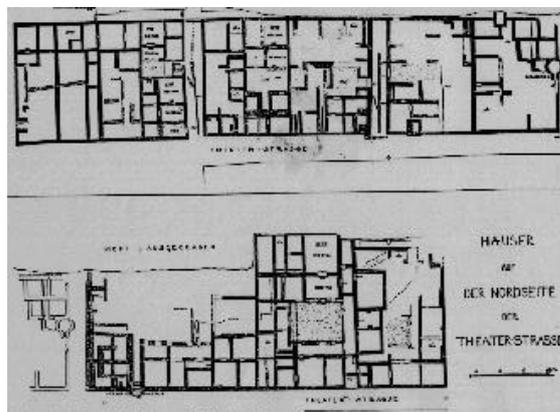


Figure 5: **The Houses of Priene on Theatre Street** (Usman 1958).

That the houses in Priene are closed at the plan and elevation level is because of “privacy”. For this reason special attention was paid to opening main entrances to side roads, and having one such door and placing them inside far from eyes. In Priene this entrance distance is up to 1 m. Sometimes the distance is longer and it makes up a section named “prothyron” in front of the street door. The prothyron formed by placing the door backward in the door space, is seen in many places because it creates a comfort for the people going in and out and it protects the door from the outer weather conditions. In the 4th century BC a corridor was made in the entrance of the rare houses which opened to a main street in order to prevent visitors from going directly into the inside generally into the atrium and disturbing the people inside. In Priene, houses without entrance corridors are rare. In some houses, because the corridor floor gradually rises, there are stairs in the middle. In Priene corridors shared by two houses can also be found. Besides, of the houses opening to side streets there are ones without corridors because of lack of space. That privacy has an important role in the lifestyle of 4th century BC, has effected not only the direction of the entrance, existence of the prothyron, and the entrance corridor, but also has brought new interference. In Priene houses some precautions are taken in order to prevent the visitors to see

the inside of the house from the door. To see the inside directly was prevented by building walls opposite the street door and at the end of the entrance corridor.

Priene houses are generally one or two floor houses. Where the landscape is sloped, the part under the ground level are used as basement floor. The stairs are made according to the land where the houses are located, either by carving rocks or by using stone or wood as material.

Another point worth mentioning about Priene houses is the existence of toilets and bathrooms inside the houses, which means that a plumbing system had been built in those years. Also, it is thought that the rooms near prostas were kitchens. Sometimes prostas were used as kitchens. For not having water arrangements round in the houses, spaces like kitchens, toilets and bath were placed all together.

In most of the Priene houses, the ground floor was shaped by cutting rocks and hard stones. On the other hand, in most of the ordinary houses, the system for building the walls were rough-walling of rubble and mortar. Some walls were rendered with browning coat. The brick walls were rarely used.

Actually, the storey height in Priene houses are not known, but the house-tops were tiled roof with wooden construction.

An examination of the plan type of Priene houses shows that they can be categorised according to three main characteristics. Priene houses can be examined under three headings; "houses with atriums", "houses with prostas", "houses with peristyle atriums".

5.1 Houses with Atriums

Houses whose entrance look to a main street open to an open atrium inside. Therefore, during Hellenistic period in Priene, houses with atriums are dominant. There are many atriums which are shapeless and untidy. Atriums are usually rectangular. There are two types of houses with atriums: "Rectangular shaped ones without peristyled" and "Square shaped ones without peristyled", (Usman 1958).

5.2 Houses with Prostas

The Greek house has pavilion at three sides of the peristil, and at the southern side there are two antes apart and carrying an architrave. Behind them there is a space which makes an indentation less than one third of the distance between the antes, (Vitruvius 1990). Between the spaces which are opened to the atrium and take air and light, is a room in Megaron style bigger and higher than the others with columns on the elevation. This space is called "prostas" by some writers and "pastas" by some others. In 4th BC there is also an "okios" which opens to the prostas, (Mansel 1988).

Oikos are places which are used as guest receiving halls; and also for official meals. Generally there is a "thamos" opening into the oikos. These places known as the thamos and amphithamos are bedrooms. The architrave, besides dining rooms and bedrooms for daily use are rooms for servants and porters and this part of the house is called the "gynaecaniti", (Vitruvius 1990).

In Prostas houses there is also a section which is kept for men and foreign visitors. These places called andron were usually located in the eastern part of the atrium and opened to the west in order to receive afternoon sunlight, (Usman 1958).

Though there are not certain accounts showing that there is a special place kept for women, it is said that the "pyrgos" in the andron is for women. In some of the houses too there are two separate divisions. It is possible that one part of the house is for women and the other for men, but this cannot be determined easily, (Usman 1958).

5.3. Peristyle Atrium Houses

As years pass in Priene a passage from prostas houses to peristyle atrium houses can be observed and pieces where Doric and Ionic orders are mixed together. Among peristyle houses

there are peristyle atriums in the style named “Rodos Peristyle” by Vitruvius, (Usman 1958). In all peristyle atriums, the roofs of high galleries look over the roofs of lower galleries. These parts have their own imposing doors and attractive entrance atriums. Sometimes four sides of the peristyle atrium is not surrounded by galleries.

6 THE IMPORTANT HOUSES IN PRIENE

6.1 The Great House

The Great House which is one of the beautiful, big and well-preserved houses of Priene occupies one whole block in the west of Theatre Street, between the fourth and fifth streets, (Figure 3: number 18), (Akurgal 1993). This house is the most typical example of the Priene houses, (Figure 6).

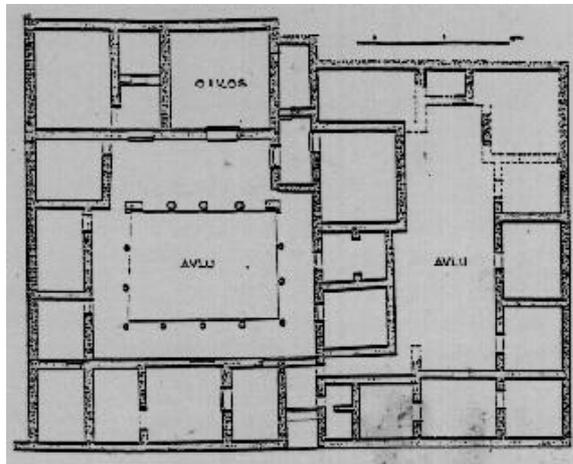


Figure 6: **The Plan of the Great House** (Usman 1958).

The front elevation of the house is 35m wide and is ornamented by rustic stone work. Looking at the valuable goods found in the house, it was determined that the house which has 26 rooms belonged to a rich person. Besides the altar belonging to Zeus Olympios shows that the house belonged to someone who had “Stephanephoros” that is, the greatest of honours and authority to organise governmental ceremonies. The ruins show that there were places reserved for men and women in the house are in fact two houses separated by a street.

The former condition of the house has been determined by archaeologists. According to this, there was a prothyron in front of the double street door of the house as in the later period. From the door a atrium was reached through a 2m wide corridor. Three sides of the atrium was surrounded by rooms, in the north, a megaron consisting of oikos and prostas and a column and coping were built in the doric order, (Figure 7).

The present situation of the house reflects the change it had gone through in the Hellenistic period, (Figure 8). In the Hellenistic period, the house was widened by taking in the 3.50m street in the west and by being combined with the house in the east, (Usman 1958). With this new shape, the house has become a peristyle house from a prostas house. In this way, the house has gained two main spaces and has permitted entrance to both women and men. So, visitors to the house passed through the men's space without entering the women's. It is thought that the house has been gone through these changes during the 2nd BC when peristyle houses were liked. With these changes, the house has become a 26 room house; for women with 16 rooms and for men with 10 rooms.

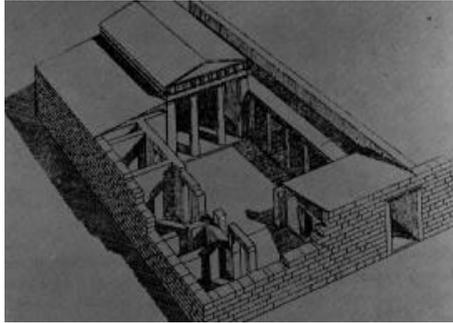


Figure 7: **The Former Condition of the Great House**(Vitruvius 1990).



Figure 8: **The Aspect of the Great House with Peristyle** (Wycherley 1986).

6.2 The House of Alexander The Great (The Sacred House)

The sacred house in the south of the main street leading to the western entrance of the city is a place of worship, (Figure 3: number 21), (Figure 9).

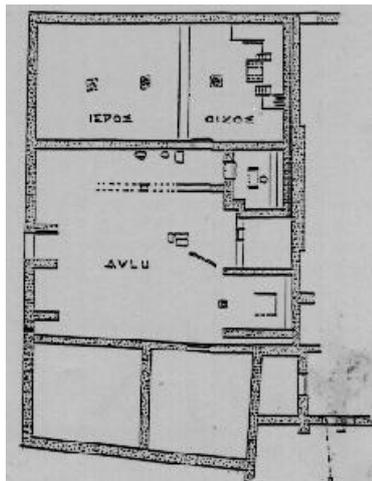


Figure 9: **The Plan of the House of Alexander the Great**(Usman 1958).

In an epitaph, now in British Museum, it is written that only people dressed in white could enter this sacred place. The house has an atrium which hasn't preserved its rectangular shape, and in the north of this atrium there is a front hall. From here an oikos, which is a three columned, big hall is entered. That this hall is sacred can be understood from the marble sacrifice table placed in front of the pedestal, (Akurgal 1993).

7 RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

This presentation which is based on the ancient settlement of Priene, enlightens today from many aspects. Priene's lifestyle and architecture which has been shaped by the accumulation of centuries, not only reflects Priene's special characteristics but also includes the characteristics of the period, and these characteristics carry universal specifications to today. These features within the content of the city of Priene may be reviewed under two main parts: urbanism and architecture.

In Priene ancient settlement, presenting the best example of Hippodamos city planning, the relationship between public buildings and residence sites are successfully handled. In this planning approach, streets and roads which cut each other with 90 degrees angles, have a restrictive function while they are forming insulas. That even the Theatre building is located in an insula surrounded by streets, can be shown as an important characteristic of Priene city planning. In the same way, that the Stadion which is not in agreement with the city's planning approach is located in the south unlike the Theatre which is in the north has created a balance on the city basis. Considered from the optical aspect, that this planning approach displays different perspectives, shows that it also creates spaces far from monotony.

On the other hand, as stated above, it may be said that Hellenistic city planning tends to be near today's understanding in terms of structure and design of the city.

A claim on that contemporary city planning shares several common points with the Hellenistic concept of planning can only be possible primarily through an understanding of unique organisation system of the Hellenistic city.

Hellenistic city used to have a criteria providing a high-level political and cultural life style, developed from necessities, life style, moral values and traditions, (Whycherley 1986). Today's conditions and circumstances are, of course, more complex and different from those of Hellenistic city. However, only truth and direct link to the past and will be valid in the future is the response of a city to its citizens in terms of their life style, necessities and traditions.

On the other hand, the most important uniqueness that this understanding of planning gave to the architecture is related aesthetic dimension of the city. In the city of Priene, those buildings placed in keeping with this understanding of planning exhibit themselves in a direct way and also accelerate the formation process of the image of the city.

In this content, considering Lynch's studies on formation of a city image, it may be put forward that the city of Priene that has all the qualities which make up a polis may be examined in the view of these studies.

Lynch has divided the grouping of the city image into five elements; paths, edges, districts, nodes, landmarks, (Lynch 1971). In the city of Priene, The Temple of Athena may considered as an example of landmark concept of Lynch, whereas Agora and its neighbourhood may be matched with Lynch's node concept since it carries a total quality with all those buildings in the city centre.

On the other hand, that the city has entrances from three different directions makes it easy to reach the city and the city centre. Also main streets leading to the entrances enables the density in the city centre to be distributed to certain areas. Those streets in east-west direction, along with those roads vertically cutting these streets, forms plan scheme of the city and, as Lynch stated, they also form those paths where observer continues, (Lynch 1971).

In parallel with the planning style of the city, Lynch's district concept becomes clear with those buildings placed inside of rectangular blocks and houses filled the remaining rectangular blocks.

In the city of Priene, designed in view of the Hippodamos plan, casual and disorganised city walls are an example of the edge concept of Lynch.

On the other hand, although the elements that Lynch put forward upon those researches have an active role for creating the city image it should be forgotten that public buildings provide Hellenistic city with uniqueness and character with the support of hundred-year-old experience of the Hellenistic art.

The aesthetic value of the Hellenistic architecture in terms both of mass shaping and planning is still valid and valuable.

It is a clear fact that Hellenes, reaching top of the aesthetic pleasure with their works of art constructed, contributed to today's architecture using both one-to-one imitation and the essence of

the historical heritage. In this content, instead of considering the city of Priene as a single image in terms of built environment, it is more meaningful to consider it as a city revealing unique samples of Hellenistic architecture.

The most important thing to be reflected from the buildings of Priene is, as in all Hellenistic cities, ensuring discovery of elements of the public buildings carrying an aesthetic value and utilisation of new design in the views of these elements.

On the other hand, in the houses which have the second important role in the city planning, it is possible to encounter many different characteristics. If considered with today's concepts, it can be stated that these characteristics are shaped by the privacy. Although, that enough resources are not available about the lifestyle of those days, brings to mind that such a planning approach may have resulted from climate data, the findings shows the existence of privacy as a concept and its unchanged usage of today. The mentioned characteristics can be considered on the basis of plan and elevation. At the plan level, it is observed that, entrances of Priene houses are opened to side streets and that a prythron as called in those days are added as a door sill, entrance corridor or corridor wall elements as they are used in eastern cultures today. In the designs where an introverted plan schema is efficient there are interior atriums and main or secondary spaces opening into the atriums. On the other hand, that interior ornaments are widespread, supports the efficiency of an introverted life style. On the elevation basis it is understood from findings that buildings have high block walls. Small windows placed at high altitude also strengthens the concept of closeness in Priene buildings.

Another concept which has importance for today is flexibility. In Priene houses the characteristics of being able to change and grow are seen as well as structures are suitable. In addition to this, the concept of modularity is often met. That Priene houses designed in a balanced and harmonious way, give way to standardisation can be shown as a characteristics supporting the contemporary concepts of standardisation and modularity. On the other hand, it will not be a mistake to say that the city of Priene, examined in the light of the above explanations and contemporary concepts such as privacy, flexibility, modularity, standardisation and etc., is full of important design principles and concepts which are familiar to our day.

As a result of these, in this paper, Priene is chosen as a model of putting forward the importance of interpretation from history, transferring the culture directly or with new interpretations such as abstract principles, rules, methods governing the spatial or structural organisation of a building or functional qualities and values possessing still on actual validity. In terms of the city of Priene, that it is wished to reach and to express the essence of the historical heritage by using a modern language is to ensure historical continuity. In this content, it is believed that, the paper has an important role for architects and for further designs.

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