

RE-PRODUCTION OF SPACE BY REFERENCE TO COLLECTIVE MEMORY- AN URBAN DESIGN STUDIO PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

Cities go through changes in time. We may observe some of these spatial changes, however we may not observe the changes in social life of the city, and as time passes we forget. Only if we dig into the memories we come across with the characteristics of the society of the past. We do this exploration from the novels, from the films, photographs or from the memories of the elderly. This paper aims to discuss the outcomes an urban design studio practice where we did examine the history of the city and used the knowledge to re-produce urban space.

This discussion firstly will focus on the significance of the knowledge of the past in shaping the future, and these discussions will be carried on the case of Bornova city center where the urban design practice have been experienced. Bornova city center is one of the very special parts of the city of Izmir, where the identity of the Ottoman period settlement, the 19th century Levantine heritage and the modern era spatial pattern can be easily observed. Parallel to the variety of the spatial patterns, the social life at the city had also carried multicultural characteristics and varieties in the time line. This paper will discuss the urban design studio practices of Bornova city center in which various characteristics of city in the time line have been one of the main references in the re-production of the urban space.

Keywords: Urban Design, Collective Memory, Re-production of Space

1. INTRODUCTION

Memory may be referred to individuals' mind in daily life, but as mentioned by Staiger and Steiner (2009) it is much more related with common settings, situations and forms of praxis, it is much more place supported. Assman also mentions that memory needs a particular setting to be realized. Concrete place, city and village or any place are referred to frames of memories. The place provides the concrete setting to encounter with the past although there may be changes. (Assman, 2011, p.24; Staiger and Steiner, 2009, p.2)

Collective memory indeed is a collection of all spatial and temporal elements, ideas, emotions and values of communities (Assman, 2011, p.25) Thus collective memory is the bound to the specific identity of place. We may claim that collective memory is the source for the identity and meaning of place. Collective memory is also referred to the memory of groups, since cities

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and settlements are full of inhabitants and shared memories of them about their shared past. The discussions about collective memory has originated from “group mind” hypothesis of collective psychology that dates back to the 19th century psychology tradition, however the term “collective memory” was first used by Halbwachs in his book “The Collective Memory” (1950). Halbwachs defines individual memory as personal and autobiographical, and collective memory as social and historical (Jahanbakhsh et al., 2015).

Since the emergence of modern era and the soulless landscape of the modern city, critiques have carried collective memory to the main agenda of social sciences and humanities, because the modern city had turned into a phantasmagorical spectacle that had started to lose its bounds with history, meaning and identity. “In a radical departure from the scientific approaches of the 1950s and 1960s, the humanistic approaches brought techniques more associated with the humanities to understand people-environment relationships” (Hall, 2006, p.25). Thus, the sources of humanistic approaches in social sciences were the films, photographs, paintings, novels and places, which are also the concrete forms of collective memory.

From an architectural perspective Aldo Rossi (1984) pointed that city acquired consciousness and memory, because the city is not only a form, the experiences and values make up its memory and form (Rossi, 1984, p.21). However, in the globalized world the collective memory disappears, the new trends, global economy, urban regeneration policies all lead to the loosing up the ties with the past, and the meaning. In order to strengthen those ties, it is necessary to survive the memories. “If the referential frames of the communicated reality disappear or change, then the consequence is forgetting” (Assman, 2011, p.25).

Architecture, urban design and preservation of the heritage are one of the main tools for the survival of collective memory. If we want to add a meaning to the places where we live and feel the identity, we still have the collective memory of the past. “If the sense of place is considered as being composed of the three elements of physical setting, activity and meaning some important consequences of collective memory like forming a link between memories and things or places, forming a clear sense of the past, and constitution of meanings and identities can enhance the sense of place by reinforcing the meaning attached to a place” (Jahanbakhsh et al., 2015).

This paper is an introduction of an urban design studio work that aimed to bring collective memory to a spatial setting through an urban design project. We have chosen the city center of Bornova district of the harbor city of Izmir in Turkey that hosted many cultural identities and cultural memories in the past. Urban centers occupy a focal position in and for our memory culture; they are the key stimulus to artists and writers (Staiger and Steiner, 2009, p.2). The city center of Bornova is also a special place with its urban fabric that represents different identities before the modern era.

Jahanbakhsh, et al. (2015) asserted that in the use of collective memory in urban regeneration projects or in urban design there are two approaches. The first is the maintenance of memorable elements and emphasis on them (place based collective memory), and the second is the representation of collective memory which is determined by Pierce’s taxonomy system and categorization in terms of different senses that perceive signs to represent collective memory. However, another method may also be used in urban design projects. We refer to it as “re-calling collective memory through learning material” Preparation of booklets, brochures, or installations on the site may help to re-call collective memory of the area.

Table 1. Methods of use of collective memory in urban design and urban regeneration projects
Source derived from Jahanbakhsh et al., 2015

Approach	Method
1. Use of place based collective memory	Refurbishment, repairing, and maintenance of memorable elements Making them easily visible Removing obstacles Making them accessible for public use
2. Representation of collective memory	Representation of collective memory through design and creation. Making collective memory perceptible as a message for citizens. (semiotics may help) Senses of sight, smell, taste, hearing and touch. (Multilayer sign system can be used) <u>For ins.</u> Sight- Visual arts, sculpturing, painting, dramatic arts Hearing- Playing pieces of music/singing etc Smell- Flowering, planting Taste- Spreading foods and candies, sweets Touch – Using Braille’s alphabet

In this particular studio work we conducted in Izmir, Bornova district, we aimed to integrate the representations of collective memory with the urban design project. In order to do this, we proposed three methods. First we applied place based collective memory approach and proposed strategies for building sites of memories in the city through urban design and architectural work. Thus, the strategies focused on making the historical places more visible and accessible. Secondly we developed strategies for the representation of the collective memory approach. The strategies developed on the use of certain places in the past and making representations of collective memory by creating signs that refer to the past. Finally, we suggested re-calling of the past through learning it, where we proposed actions accordingly. All of these proposals were depended on our research about the history of the area and the results of the image analysis of Kevin Lynch which we applied at this particular place.

2. COLLECTIVE MEMORY OF BORNOVA CITY CENTER

2.1. History

Located at the northeast of Izmir, Bornova province is a junction point between Aegean Region and Central Anatolia Region. With its rich and multicultural history, it is not just a junction between regions, but also between cultures, believes and historical periods. Bornova’s history dates back to 6500 B.C. The first settlements in Bornova were Yassitepe, İpeklikuyu and Yeşilova Höyüğü (mound), which were also the oldest known prehistoric ruins in Aegean Region. Later on Bornova housed many civilizations such as Amazons, Hittites, Ions, Frigs, Lydia, Persians, Macedonians, Kingdom of Pergamon and Romans in Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Periods (URL 2, 2014, URL1; Mert, 2002).

Turkish dominion in Bornova has started in 1076. Once a small town in Ottoman Empire, Bornova has developed in the 17th century after it began to serve Frank tradesmen as a summer place. By the construction of the first highway and the railway, the connection to the city center has been provided (Birol Akkurt, 2004). At the end of the 19th century, Bornova has become a populated town with its organized and large bazar, grand mansions, post office, town hall, two

mosques, four masjids, one synagogue, Protestant, Catholic, Armenian and Rum churches (Mert, 2002). Mansions were a significant contributor to Bornova's historical heritage and identity. Today some of the mansions are under conservation, some are ruined and some are disappeared.

Investigations on the settlement of the 19th century displayed the location of communities of different identities. It is seen that each community had settled in certain neighborhoods surrounding their religious buildings. Muslims were settled at the northeast around Bornova Büyük Mosque and the bazaar surrounding it with single storey buildings. The Armenian and Jewish neighborhoods were settled towards northeast and around the Armenian Church and the synagogue. At the east, Rum (Greek) neighborhoods and at the south Levantines were settled where the Catholic Church is situated. At this period, Levantines were dominant and effective in daily life and in activities together with Muslim and Rum communities. In addition to their schools, the Levantines had established English Sports Club with its large golf course and tennis courts (Birol Akkurt, 2004). In 1890 the first soccer game, in 1895 the first athletics, and in 1900 the first bicycle race in Turkey took place in Bornova (URL 2, 2014).

The socio-cultural structure of the settlement has changed between 1919 and 1922, after the Rum communities were exchanged with Turks from Crete and migrants from Balkans and Anatolia. Even though the Levantines continued their existence in the area for a while, due to the social and commercial changes in periods 1925-1930 and 1940-1960, they started to disappear gradually (Birol Akkurt, 2004), but some of the Levantine families still live at the area.

Urbanization in Bornova has increased especially after the Republic was established in 1923. In 1927 the first professional map and in 1934 the first development plan of the settlement were drawn. In 1956 Ege University was established and in 1957 Bornova officially became a district. Together with rapid urbanization and construction, migration has increased in the district especially after 1970s; agricultural areas began to disappear and industrial areas began to expand towards the east (Mert, 2002). Today, being home to three universities, industrial, service and agricultural areas as well as historical heritage, Bornova is one of the greatest districts in Izmir city with its 435,000 population.

2.2. Place Based Collective Memory Analysis through Image Analysis

Today, the concrete form of collective memory can be easily observed at the city center. The Ottoman Bazaar, the mosque, the Catholic Church and the mansions of the Levantine still exist at the city center. The Ottoman Bazaar acts as a nodal point, the Levantine mansions which are registered as heritage buildings form a zone, the Ottoman Bazaar together with the artisans' ateliers form another zone of collective memory. Within those zones Santa Maria Catholic Church and Hüseyin İsabey Mosque are the landmarks of those zones. Peterson Mansion also exists as a landmark apart from those zones.



Figure 1. Nodes and Landmarks in the Study Area

Although, functions of most of the mansions, and the Bazaar have changed, the city center still represents the collective memory properly in a concrete form. In the urban design project studio we aimed to interpret collective memory into our urban design strategies to revive the identities and the diversity of the area. In doing this we used three methods to develop strategies. First one is use of place based collective memory in re-production of space. Second is use of re-calling collective memory through learning, and third is the representation of collective memory.

3. USE OF PLACE BASED COLLECTIVE MEMORY IN RE-PRODUCTION OF SPACE

As explained at the part referring to the history of Bornova, there are sites that still represent two different periods and identities of the past inhabitants, thus there is concrete collective memory in Bornova. However, according to the densification of pedestrians in the area, we had observed that most of the users and visitors of Bornova were not aware of this concrete form of collective memory. In order to make those places accessible we decided on the main strategy of “connection” of those sites that represented different identities of the past. Under the umbrella of the main strategy of “connection”, two main objectives referring to the knowledge of the past were proposed: (1) connection between the former and the current, (2) connection between the tradition and the modern. To achieve this strategy we organized paths those take people from one concrete form of cultural space to another.

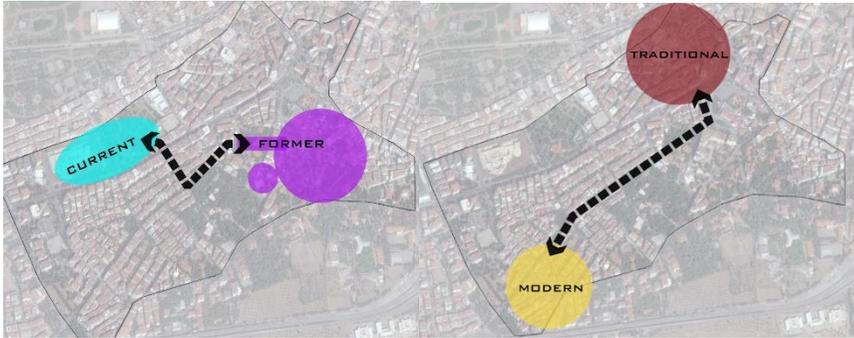


Figure 2. Main Strategy – Connection

3.1. Accessibility to the Collective Memory

In order to follow and sightsee the historical structures a route defined with design elements is proposed. This route aims to revitalize the registered areas and increase awareness of history.

3.2. Refunctioning Vacant Mansions as a Restaurant, Café, Library etc.

Assigning public use or commercial use to abandoned mansions is beneficial in terms of safety, aesthetics and engagement with history. To achieve this, we suggested to increase current applications on refunctioning the mansions as a library, museum, café and hotel, and to encourage their protection and maintenance via some policies and incentives.



Figure 3a. Existing – An Abandoned Mansion | Source: DEU Urban Design Project Archive, 2014



Figure 2b. An Implementation which was proposed to be increased | Source: DEU Urban Design Project Archive, 2014

3.3. Visibility -Removing Structures Hiding the Historical Buildings which are Poor in Quality and Inconvenient to their Environment

Newly-built structures around historical buildings hinder perceptibility and legibility of historical environment. For instance, irregular buildings with commercial use around Santa Maria Church occupy and block the front zone of the church and create an undesired environment. We suggested first to investigate and then remove those kinds of buildings. The ones which are not possible to destruct may undergo an arrangement based on certain criteria and design guidelines.



Figure 3. Existing – Poor Quality Buildings in Front
Source: DEU Urban Design Project Archive, 2014

3.4. Visibility - Limiting Car Parks around Historical Landmarks and inside Preserved Areas

Parking on street in historical areas prevents accessibility to historical buildings and cause traffic and chaos in narrow historic streets. Our suggestion was to limit parking via encouraging public transportation and supplying existing car park demand with underground or multi-storey car parks.



Figure 4. Existing – On Street Parking
Source: DEU Urban Design Project Archive, 2014

3.5. Visibility -Arranging the Environment via Highlighting and Pointing Historical Structures

Highlighting historical landmarks is effective in exhibition of historical values. To achieve this, urban design arrangements via taking the landmarks as focal points was proposed.



Figure 5. An Example - Brasov/ Romania,
Source: http://agoratravel.ro/file/2014/03/hotel-attraction-image.php_.jpg

3.6. Visibility - Illumination of Essential Historical Structures

Illumination of essential historical structures is also effective in recognition of them in dark and increase the sense of safety at nights.

3.7. Maintenance - Restoration of Registered Structures Close to Their Original Form

In order to maintain the memory, we suggested preserving registered buildings, urban furniture, landscape elements and walls carefully; also to renovate man-made elements close to their original form.

4. USE OF RE-CALLING COLLECTIVE MEMORY OF PLACE THROUGH LEARNING

Collective memory may be re-called by learning. Thus, material that explains the history of the place may help in the re-calling process of memory. For this reason, with this urban design project we proposed preparation of booklets on history of Bornova, designing information boards and artistic objects that refer to the past of Bornova, and utilizing the historic walls for exhibitions.

4.1. Preparing Booklets on History of Bornova

With the aim of introducing the district and its past, we proposed that booklets on Bornova can be produced, which will be available not only in tourist information centers, but also in cafés and restaurants. The booklets will be effective in increasing awareness and consciousness of citizens for Bornova.

4.2. Designing Information Boards and Artistic Objects

Compatible with Bornova's identity, information boards and artistic objects can be located to determined points. These structures will be effective in learning the history, catching attention and supplying aesthetic needs.

4.3. Utilizing the Walls of Levantine Mansions for the Purpose of Information Sharing and Exhibition

Blind walls of the mansions create an unsecure feeling and set a barrier by breaking the continuity in urban environment. We proposed redesigning of these blind walls without damaging its historical character and structure. They can be used for the purpose of exhibition in relation to the past such as old photos of the town and old inhabitants of the town, and sayings related to Bornova. Utilizing the mansion walls is powerful in reproduction of space in terms of minimizing the barrier effect, informing the public in an attractive way, increasing the dynamism and mobility in walled streets, and to do so enhancing the sense of security.

5. USE OF REPRESENTATION OF COLLECTIVE MEMORY THROUGH EXPERIENCES

In order to develop strategies for the urban design of the city center of Bornova district, we used representation of collective memory through experiences. Thus we developed strategies that are derived from the past experiences of the city center such as;

5.1. Arranging the Local Market in Everyday of the Week and Encouraging the Sale of Local Productions

Bornova market has an importance in history. The frequency of the market can be increased to everyday of the week and sale of local products such as a muscatel grape can be encouraged.

5.2. Reorganization of the Traditional Sport Facilities of the Past at the City Center

Referring to the first football match, athletics and bicycle race in Turkey, which were held in Bornova, traditionalizing and celebrating football games, athletics and bicycle races can allow recalling collective memory and enhancing sense of belonging.



Figure 6. Athletics in Bornova in Early 1900s
Source: <http://levantineheritage.com/note54.htm>



Figure 7. Bicycle Races in Bornova in Early 1900s
Source: <http://levantineheritage.com/panionian.htm>

5.3. Revitalizing Traditional Artisan Manufacturing and Consumption Patterns in Traditional Market and Bazaar

Encouraging traditional manufacturing and consumption styles and promote them in traditional market and bazaar is effective in revival of these patterns.

5.4. Refunctioning the Former Second-hand Bookseller Area and the Former Cinema as it was in the Past

As learnt from the locals, the area in the junction of Süvari Street and Cumhuriyet Square was used to be an area where second-hand booksellers stood. Rearranging the area with its former function can be beneficial in terms of reminding the inhabitants the recent past and maintaining the traditional use of space.

Interviews with inhabitants also revealed that the area facing the Bornova Büyük Park was used to function as an open-air cinema. Reopening the cinema can create a nostalgic ambiance

and recall the past. In addition to the connection of the former and the current, it can connect dynamic Bornova center to tranquil historical center, which also raise the attention of citizens to the historical center.

Table 2: Method of Using Collective Memory in the Urban Design Project for Bornova City Center

Approach	Method	Action
1. Use of place based collective memory	Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining pathways to the heritage sites
	Refunctioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refunctioning vacant heritage buildings • Re-use of old open-air cinema
	Visibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing structures hiding the heritages • Limiting car parks around the heritages
	Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arranging environment via highlighting and pointing historical structures • Illumination of historical structures • Restoration of registered structures
2. Re-Calling collective memory of place through learning	Informing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing booklets on the history of the area • Designing information boards and artistic objects • Using the walls of the Levantine Mansions for informing and exhibition
3. Representation of collective memory	Representation of collective memory through experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arranging the local markets for the sale of local products • Re organization of the traditional sport facilities of the past at the city center • Revitalization of the manufacturing of the artisans • Refunctioning the former second hand bookseller and the former cinema

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Collective memory is the source for the identity and meaning of place. The modern city has lost its ties with the past, thus it has also lost meaning and the cultural variety. The construction of the modern city also constructed the modern identities and cities started to carry the modern outlook all over the capitalist world. However, reactions to the design of the modern city created aspiration to the diversity of the past. As Rossi (1984) pointed city is not only form, it is the values and experiences that made up the form. Therefore, city acquires consciousness and memory. Today, with the urban design projects we try to add meaning to the city, and if it is the central city, the meaning comes often from the past.

Collective memory is not only seen as a culturally constructed representation of the past, it needs to be sustained and transmitted via narratives, and traditions, bodily practices, material objects and places. The city is a prime site in which the negotiation of collective memory can take place and where it can be studied (Staiger and Steiner, 2009, p.5). Memory lives and survives through communication, and if it is broken off, or if the referential frames of the communicated reality disappear or change, then the consequence is forgetting. We only

remember what we communicate and what we can locate in the frame of the collective memory (Assman, 2011, p.23).

In this particular case of Bornova, as we explored the historical past of the city, we came across with different representations of Muslim, Levantine, Greek, Armenian and Jewish identities, and their different experiences which add so much to the meaning of the place. Therefore, we used collective memory in the re-shaping process of the central area. The method to reproduce the space were using place based and experience based collective memory, and re-calling the past by learning. Place based elements were mansions, churches, mosques and the bazaar which also act as nodes and landmarks in the area. We suggested reviving this type of memory via providing the accessibility, refunctioning, visibility and maintenance of heritages. Re-calling the collective memory of place through learning we suggested raising the awareness of inhabitants and tourists regarding the place and history by informing them with booklets, information boards, artistic objects and exhibitions. Finally, we suggested to enhance experience based collective memory via traditionalizing and revitalizing production and consumption traditions and the sport games that were held in the past. After inspecting the problems, potentials, needs and gaps in memory, we developed actions based on these dimensions and enrich the actions with decisions on urban design. Also while making these decisions we were influenced by the examples from successful projects in different cities.

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