

Memory- space relation in an adaptive reuse building: Analysis of Cengel Han- Rahmi Koc Museum

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Abstract

A space is perceived by experiences and usage. The purpose of the study is conveying the memory effects in an adaptive reuse building in order to discuss interior space and memory. Protecting the essence of the used materials or structural features and being respectful to the past experiences in the place will increase emotional experiences of the user and will preserve the building in the matter of significance. In order to explain this approach with a case Cengel Han is studied with both individual and regional effects of the building in the memory were interpreted.

Keywords: Memory of spaces, sense of place, essence of the space, memory space relation.

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1. Introduction

Places of memory combine the emotional experiences and memories with the space in different expressions. Space is a bridge between man and place. The connection between space and human changes according to the impressed the user and thereby how the users experience the space. According to Schulz (1980) 'place is evidently an integral part of existence.' He describes place as 'we mean something more than abstract location'. Place is existentially his own part of man and when we are in a place, some components of the place (like the design elements, the atmosphere of the space, emotional experiences etc.) associate with us in some way. These associations come from our past experiences, affect our memory and make us bond with the space by triggering any memory.

Memory-space relation has been interpreted to different dimensions and this relation is mostly known with the terms 'genius loci' and 'sense of a place'. Both terms represent the spirit of place and the character of place. In the literature, researches about this relation are more common in areas of urban design, collective memory, memorials, historical and cultural heritage and artefacts than every day's public spaces. Both genius loci and 'character' are well represented in considerations of conservation, since this deal so much with values and attitudes towards past and contemporary places, and how they are to change in the future (Jiven & Larkham, 2003). In this respect, to expound the memory space relation with a historical public space and evaluate the contemporary character of the space, this paper is studied with considering the identification of three dimensions of visual, psychology and spiritual aspects of sense of place (Mohammad et. al, 2013).

Connection between past and future is important for the memory- space relation. Due to the importance of this connection, the adaptively re-used building Cengel Han which has new function by the helps of the conservation process, is chosen as an example. The building is analyzed over the personal experience and observation of the author, considering the visual, psychology and spiritual dimensions of the place.

2. Methodology

This paper is prepared with personal observations and experiences. It is based on explained opinions and perceptions to discover the memory- space relation. To interpret the relationship between space and memory over a case study, a literature review was undertaken that includes the definitions of 'sense of place', historical background of Cengel Han, the restoration process of the building. To consider the identification of the three dimensions of visual, psychology and spiritual aspects of sense of place with a personal observation, the building which has been adaptively reused as a museum was visited and observed. After this observation, the data, the texts, projects and photos, were discussed in order to convey the relation considering the frame of the three dimensions of sense of place's visual, psychology and spiritual aspects. To discuss the visual dimension, some photos and plans were used and the physical aspects like materials and plans were evaluated. The psychological and spiritual dimensions were interpreted by the thought of the visitors' spatial and emotional experiences and the effects of the adaptive function of the space.

3. A place: Cengel Han- Rahmi Koc Museum

Rahmi Koc Museum is one of the structures which are in citadel, an important place of Ankara. The building was adaptively re-used as a museum and obtains in the historical pattern of the area. This building, as memorials 'serve for both transferring information to all visitors, younger generations, and tourists giving the opportunity to establish empathy with past and help the society to remember the experiences lived through (Gurler & Ozer, 2012)'.

3.1. Historical background of Cengel Han

Ankara has political importance because of its geographical location that has maintained throughout its history. Ankara Citadel and the neighborhood have been known as a characteristic living part of the city for 3000 years. The citadel is a contemporary part of the city today.



Figure 1. (a) Ankara Citadel; (b) alleys from the citadel; (c) outside view of the Museum- The entrance

“Looking back to the history of the Ankara Citadel (Fig.1 (a)) we find that Galatians, who occupied Ankara in 271 B.C., used the structure for purposes of government and defense. The building is in the zone of Hans. Most of the buildings in the han district were constructed when the Ottoman Empire was its zenith in the 16th and 17th centuries. As the Ottoman Empire flourished growth in domestic demand throughout the rest of Europe also helped fuel a surge in trade that flowed through Ankara. The Han district is on the ancient Silk Road between China and Europe. Cengel Han (Fig.1 (b)) is one of the Hans which was constructed during this period.

The Cengel Han was built in 1522-1523 during the reign of Kanuni Sultan Suleyman by Damat Rustem Paşa who was married with the Sultan’s daughter Mihrimah Sultan. During the first half of the 20th century Cengel Han used as a trade center. Vehbi Koc was also had a store in Cengel Han when he first started in his business life (provided from the exhibition, 2015) (Ciftci, 2006; Mimarizm, 2008).”

Cengel Han, which is located in the Han district in the citadel, originally designs as the function of accommodation. The function has changed during the historical process as a trade center and the rooms used as stores, mostly for textile and leather trade and before falling into disuse, the place was turned into storage. For a period of time the place did not use for anything and the structure was damaged because the rests of the acidic liquids. In order to preservation process of the citadel, the Cengel Han was regenerated the effects of The Museology Foundation of Rahmi Koc whose desire to be the business management. Finally after the regeneration process Cengel Han has been started to use as an adaptively re-used museum.

3.2. Regional evaluation and restoration process

Historical pattern of the citadel has been preserved with the Anatolian houses, the bazaar, which stores comprise from transformed substantial structures, and the cobblestone alleys. Visual affects has more power for the historical pattern of the citadel and the structures. Wooden houses are the examples of traditional architecture and the stone walls of the citadel with the other substantial historical buildings have an emotional power from the past (Fig. 2.). It is my belief that this view has strong effects on the psychological and spiritual aspects of place because successful to reflect the spirit of the area to the visitors.

In the total pattern of the area, the unchanged facade and appearance thought to be important for protecting the image of the city and the silhouette which is already exist, in the matter of the three dimensions of the image of city's identity, structure and meaning (Lynch, 2010).



Figure 2. (a) Ankara Citadel; (b) houses on the walls of the citadel; (c) the clock tower on the walls

The Han was authentically renovated in 2003-2005. During the renovation, restoration and statically reinforcement process started after the cleaning the residuals, and the structural elements authentically reconstructed. Accessories and damaged or missing parts of the interior fittings also reconstructed authentically with the compatible materials as their originals.

Contemporary implementations are the transparent roof covering of the courtyard (Fig.3 (a)) and the elevator. The structure and the organization schemas were preserved as its original and the functional adaptation fitted on the original plans. After the renovation, the building becomes a museum therefore that change we describe the building an adaptively re use building. Having different functions has not caused any additions from the projects in anyway. More than 3000 variable industrial objects which have transmitted from past to present have been displayed in the 32 rooms which exist in the Han. Along with the first functional change the rooms came into stores and, after the second change these stores used as the exhibition halls of the museum so this separation is useful for the exhibits.



Figure 3.(a)the courtyard; (b) a view from the exhibition, arches and the materials; (c) exhibition (sailing part)

Cengel Han has been adaptively re-used as Rahmi Koc Museum. Renovation with protecting the essence of the space and being respectful to the historical and past experiences in the space emphasise the given importance of the space in the matter of significance. Courtyard redesigned as a restaurant and its function keeps the original function alive besides that it increases the spatial experience of the space and presents a different perspective to feel the character of the space.

4. Memory Space Relation

Memory and space relation has defined variable ways and studies in the literature. In this paper the relation examines by personal interpretations over individually selected aspects with an adaptively re used historical building, these aspects based on the idea of the three dimensions of sense of a place which are the visual, psychology and spiritual aspects. According to the Schulz (1980) “we mean a totality made up of concrete things having material substance, shape and color”. He determines the union of these things ‘an environmental character’ that is the essence of the place. If we can describe the place a total phenomenon, we can also describe the space as a total phenomenon. This union includes both the physical features and the psychological features like memories and experiences.

We mention ‘experience’ as both physical and emotional experiences. Physically being in a space is generally not enough to experience or live the space. Actual using for the space starts when the past experiences constitute a connection between man and space. According to Heidegger the presence of the space is formed with perceived place by the user’s experience, not with the mathematically perceived space (Sharr, 2013).

Features of a historical place have been different from past to the present because of the time difference and needs. In present the user experience the space with feelings and imagination by using their own memories. “We all retain memories of places. They identify who we are as individuals. At the same time, they tie us to networks of people, culture and society. Even through time they reach into the past to people whose lives and experiences were as real as ours, and into the future to those whose lives we can only imagine(Downing, 2003).

The original character is the essence of space, given importance and having meanings of space is related to the authenticity of the place. Museums are one of the successful places that manage to convey the meaningful relation between past to present to the visitors. As we pointed out earlier parts in the paper that historical places serve for both transferring information to all visitors, society and provide to establish empathy with past experiences thus this strengths the effects of the individual and collective memory. The stories of place tell us the character of the place (Mohammad et. al, 2013).

Perceiving the character of a place is possible to know- experience the design features of the place, the place’s importance in the historical pattern of the location, the connection of its past, the emotional effects for the user, the details and the stories of the place.

3.1. Memory space relation in visual aspects

Visual aspect represents for the physical experience and features such as architectural projects, photos, materials in this paper. For perceive the place we need to think the place as a total ‘thing’. According to this holistic approach, the user experiences the place with its environmental character. In this case the historical pattern of the area has importance in the matter of the city image because of its collective value. To experience the place, I started to visit the alleys that below the citadel and then experience the museum. If the place is experienced as a whole character, the given meaning of the space could be different for every individual visitor.



Figure 4. Views from the exhibition

The stores, the crowd and the mobility, the antique stores all of them are a part of a story from past to the present. The materials, colors, patterns, help to record the view- the experience in our memory. This experience is a kind of visual experience to be performed by a visitor. These recorded memories will help us to bond a new place by triggering with something that we experienced before. Besides that, the other method to have physical experience is imagination. Visually perceived places and objects give us the opportunity of imagine the story of the place. We can experience the place by imagination the past events of the place and it could be say that the historical places have more powerful effects to imagine the past because the total character of the place has the footprints of the past.

In the example of Rahmi Koc Museum the place has built a bridge between memory and emotional-spatial experience with the authentic structure and compatible materials as originals, the woodworks and the exhibitions transformed from the past.

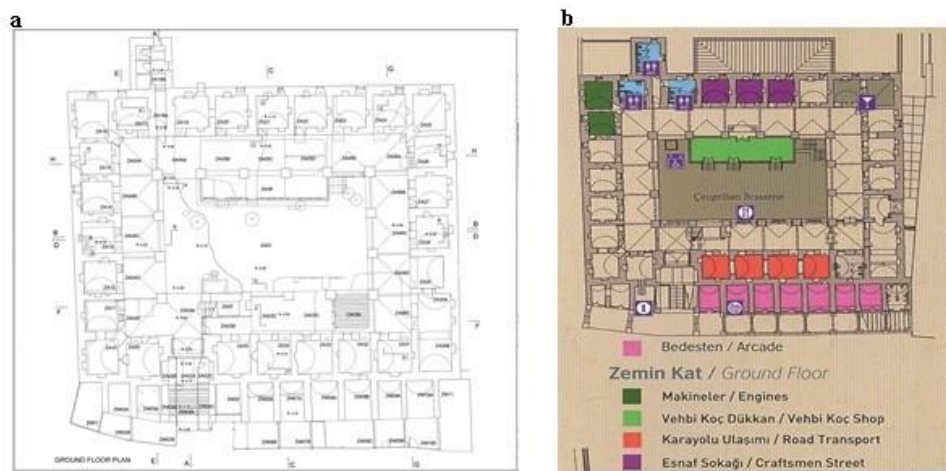


Figure 5. (a) The ground floor plan of the renovation project (taken from the permission by KA-BA Conservation of Historic Buildings and Architecture); (b) the ground floor exhibition plan

The architectural plan and structural features have important roles of the perception process. In the museum the rooms which have already exist in the original accommodation function used as exhibition halls. Within the Fig.5 the restoration project of the ground floor plan and the present exhibition in ground plan is contained the exhibition halls and courtyard. This separation is useful for the variable branch of exhibits and conveying their different stories. The courtyard and its present function is maintained the authentic function as a restaurant. The courtyard simplifies the digestion of

the sense of the place. Other two floors and the garden of the building were designed to have the same character of the place and exhibition.

4.2 Memory space relation in emotional aspects

Jong (2002) reminds us that “memories are sensual, personal, and place-specific. This study based on a personal observation to convey the relation between memory and space by experience. The two dimensions of a sense of place psychology and spiritual aspects are mentioned as emotional aspects in this part. Visiting the place both regional and the museum helped for giving meanings a place, to understand and describe the atmosphere of the collective memory in the historical places in a holistic approach. Rosenberg (2012) noticed this advice as “the memorial (for this study we mention that as space) engages the walker as a viewer, and through these chance itineraries the site of commemoration is defined and performed.”



Figure 6. (a) A view from the g.floor exhibition; (b) Gift shops from the outside; (c) side alleys of the museum

Bachelard (2013) reminds us that the living space is beyond the geometrical space. As we can see his point that having a physical presence in a place not enough for experience the place. To feel the spirit and character of the space psychologically we require the imaginations and associations. “In order to be able to identify and continually refine and redefine the spirit of a place, a place must be experienced as meaningful (Jong, 2010).

Places of memory or the memory of places closely related to both individuals and the society. Especially in public spaces ‘collective memory’ has importance for cultural values. The spaces which have collective importance, affects the individuals’ experience and perception. Identifying a space with meanings given by the society has power on visitor’s feelings.

5. Conclusion

Concept of genius loci is an ancient Roman belief which is every independent being has its genius, its guardian spirit. The spirit determines their character or essence. This essence defines as the character of the space or atmosphere (Schulz, 1980). According to Schulz, genius loci are defined as the atmosphere. Some researchers argue that the term denotes ‘a sense of place’. All of the terms points to the fact that, these are represent the similar things; meanings, the experiences both emotional and spatial, connections with past and future events of the place.

In the examples of the paper, memory- space relation observation agreed with the submission of “the form and the history of the space is closely related with the genius loci or the sense of place” (Jiven& Larkham, 2003).

Thinking about the places of memories or memory of places is a complex thing. The place has its own character for ‘a visitor’ besides this the place has a character for ‘the society’. Sense of place is generally remembered with ‘collective memory’. In this study, I have interpreted my own opinions, my own observations; it is possible and has lots of examples that the concept of ‘sense of place’ related with the collective memory. As agreed by Allen (2009) the transfer of collective memory from individual memory, from subjectively held experience to collective representation, is a complex task.

Designing memory sites; or preserving the existing ones, which are of great importance in terms of spirituality for the societies and their collective memories, by integrating the original spirits keeping memories alive and strengthening memory and has a positive effect on collective and cultural identity (Gurler & Ozer, 2013). The museum should not only regard giving information to the visitor, but also keep the memories alive and establish a connection between the space and the past experiences of the visitor.

In conclusion after this study, designing a space by protecting the essence and respecting what exist instead of drawing a new silhouette by removing traces can increase spatial and emotional quality of experience.

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