

RECONSTITUTION OF PLACE WITHIN THE RENOVATION OF THE HISTORIC RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT BORNOVA, IZMIR

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The historic districts are one of the main components of the world heritage by representing the physical, social and cultural characters of their land and time. Due to the changes in the social, cultural, economical and demographical structure, these environments are threatened and even vanished. Thus, reorganization of these places has been one of the main concerns of the environmental studies for so far. The renovation, transformation and revitalization projects focusing on the historic districts are targeting to redefine the urban role of the place and to reintegrate them to the former life while covering the risk to weaken the cultural values and to form gaps within the collective memory. Accordingly, the transformation of the historic districts has to succeed in two main issues; to sustain the cultural identity of the place and to undertake the appropriate functions to be integrated with today's life.

In this theoretical framework, this study focuses on the effects of the renovation implementations on the historic residential district of Bornova, Izmir- Turkey. The historic district of Bornova was mainly formed by the Levantine groups in the 19th century. As being the representatives of the Western culture, the Levantines constructed living quarters that recall their own life styles in the land of Anatolia. Due to the political paradox of the early 20th century (the 1st World War and the War of Independence); the changes in the property system of 1950's- 60's and the public improvements of 80's- 90's, the social structure of the settlement has changed while a great majority of the physical environment continued its existence. Today, a major part of these residents have renovated as cultural places and a number of them have reused for commercial activities while some are still serving as houses.

Considering the arguments on the transformation of historic districts and the renovation of the historic residents of Bornova, this study aims to discuss the sustainability of the cultural identity within the reconstitution of the place. By evaluating the renovation process of the historic residents, the relations between the space and the social/ cultural structures are compared while the place attachment, residents' satisfaction and the tension between the transformed identities and today's attitudes are questioned.